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THE

LITERARY LIFE

OF

THE REV. WILLIAM HARNESS

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THE REV. WILLIAM HARNESS,

VICAR OF ALL SAINTS, KNIGHTSBRIDGE,

AND PREBENDARY OF ST. PAUL'S.

BY

THE REV. A. G. L'ESTRANGE.

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PREFACE.

This sketch of the long and laborious life of my esteemed friend is the only return which it is in my power to make for the many favours he conferred upon me. From what I knew of his character, I feel sure that the tribute would not have been unacceptable to him. Some record, also, appeared due to the public, for his life, unobtrusive as it was, presented many a useful lesson of generosity, cheerfulness, and moderation. His wide sympathies extended to all classes of society; he took an interest in their joys and sorrows, their toils and relaxations. Such kindly feelings gained for him the affections of rich and poor, and made him a successful advocate of those Christian principles which he lived and laboured to inculcate.

A. G. L'ESTRANGE.

LONDON:
October, 1871.

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THE LITERARY LIFE

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THE REV. WILLIAM HARNESS.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD. — EARLY FRIENDSHIP WITH MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.—SCHOOL DAYS AT HARROW.—BECOMES ACQUAINTED WITH LORD BYRON. — INTERRUPTION AND RENEWAL OF THEIR INTIMACY. —VISIT TO NEWSTEAD.—LIFE AT CAMBRIDGE.—REFINING INFLUENCE OF LITERATURE AND SOCIETY.—LETTER FROM DR. BLAND.

WILLIAM HARNESS was born on the 14th of March, 1790. In date he was thus highly privileged, for he was contemporary with those remarkable men who rendered the earlier decades of this century the brightest in English literature. His birthplace was near the village of Wickham,* on the verge of Bere Forest—a tract which, like many others in South Hampshire, was then rich in sylvan luxuriance, and retains even to the present day some lingering vestiges of its ancient beauty. Here Dr.

* Where William of "Wykeham" was born.

Harness,* his father, lived until the year 1796, when on the breaking out of the war he accompanied Lord Hood to the Mediterranean as Physician to the Fleet.

One of William Harness's earliest friends—born at Alresford, in the same woodland district—was Mary Russell Mitford. Their families had long been connected: Dr. Harness gave away Miss Russell, who became Miss Mitford's mother; and it was here that the future authoress passed those happy days—and her earliest years were her happiest—to which she reverted with such fond remembrance in after-life. Here, in the spacious library, lined with her grandfather Russell's books, or in the old-fashioned garden, among the stocks and hollyhocks, she and little William would chase away the summer hours, until the time when the carriage arrived, which was to carry her playmate back to Wickham. A picture taken when she was about six years old enables us to form some idea of her at this time. It represents her with her hair cut short across her forehead, and flowing down at the back in long glossy ringlets, while in her

* From some observations he had made in the West Indies, he conjectured that the use of lemons would greatly improve the sanitary condition of the Navy. The discovery has since been generally adopted, and proved an inestimable benefit to our seamen. The family of Harness is said to be ancient, and the name to have been originally "Harneis."

face there is a sedateness and gravity beyond her years, such as we might expect to find in a young lady devoted to study, and celebrated for early feats of memory. William Harness, on the other hand —by two years the younger—was full of joyous and exuberant spirits, with a bright beaming countenance, a rosy complexion, and a profusion of dark hair which curled and clustered on his open brow.

On Dr. Harness receiving an appointment at Lisbon, his family left Wickham. A voyage to Portugal in those days was something approaching to an adventure. Vessels bound for that coast started from Falmouth or Mount's Bay,* and as they were entirely dependent upon canvas, the day of their departure was as uncertain as that of their arrival. They had a tedious voyage, with baffling winds; and little William Harness long remembered

> "The noise and racket
> Of that odious Lisbon packet,"

which Byron so heartily anathematized a few years afterwards. But all the sickness and suffering were forgotten and fully compensated when they steered into the broad Tagus with flowing sails, and the

* As in Milton's time :—

> "Where the great vision of the guarded mount
> Looks to Nomancos and Bayona's hold."

view of the city, rising in terrace above terrace, amid gardens and orange groves, broke upon their longing sight like some vision of a brighter world.

Soon after his father's return to England, William Harness was sent to Harrow, where he was placed under the care of the celebrated Dr. Bland. On his entering the school, he became acquainted with Lord Byron in a manner which was certainly most creditable to the latter. It will be best to give Mr. Harness's own account of this circumstance:

"My acquaintance with Lord Byron began very early in life, on my first going to school at Harrow. I was then just twelve years old. I was lame from an early accident, and pale and thin in consequence of a severe fever, from which, though perfectly recovered in other respects, I still continued weak. This dilapidated condition of mine—perhaps my lameness more than anything else—seems to have touched Byron's sympathies. He saw me a stranger in a crowd; the very person likely to tempt the oppression of a bully, as I was utterly incapable of resisting it; and, in all the kindness of his generous nature, he took me under his charge. The first words he ever spoke to me, as far as I can recollect them, were, "If any fellow bullies you, tell me; and I'll thrash him if I can." His protection was not long needed; I was soon strong

again, and able to maintain my own; but, as long as his help was wanted, he never failed to render it. In this manner our friendship began when we were both boys, he the elder of the two; and it continued, without the slightest interruption, till he left Harrow for Cambridge.

"After this there was a temporary cessation of intercourse. We wrote to each other on his first leaving school; but the letters, as is wont to be the case, became gradually less and less communicative and frequent, till they eventually ceased altogether. The correspondence seemed to have come to a conclusion by common consent, till an unexpected occasion of its renewal occurred on the appearance of his first collection of poems, the 'Hours of Idleness.'* This volume contained

* The critiques on which called forth "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." Byron seems always to have had an unfortunate and irresistible love of satire. Mr. Dyce (in Rogers' Table Talk) makes the following reference: "At the house of the Rev. W. Harness, I remember hearing Moore remark that he thought the natural bent of Byron's genius was to satirical and burlesque poetry. On this Mr. Harness observed: 'When Byron was at Harrow, he one day, seeing a young acquaintance at a short distance who was a violent admirer of Bonaparte, roared out·

"'Bold Robert Speer was Bony's bad precursor,
Bob was a bloody dog, but Bonaparte a worser.'

Moore immediately wrote the lines down with the intention of inserting them in his 'Life of Byron,' which he was then preparing; but they do not appear in it."

an early essay of his satirical powers against the head-master of his late school; and very soon after its publication I received a letter from Byron—short, cold, and cutting—reproaching me with a breach of friendship, because I had, as he was informed, traduced his poetry in an English exercise, for the sake of conciliating the favour of Dr. Butler. The only answer I returned to the letter was to send him the rough copy of my theme. It was on the Evils of Idleness. After a world of puerilities and commonplaces, it concluded by warning mankind in general, and the boys of Harrow in particular, if they would avoid the vice and its evils, to cultivate some accomplishment, that each might have an occupation of interest to engage his leisure, and be able to spend his 'Hours of Idleness' as profitably as our late popular schoolfellow. The return of post brought me a letter from Byron, begging pardon for the unworthiness he had attributed to me, and acknowledging that he had been misinformed. Thus our correspondence was renewed: and it was never again interrupted till after his separation from Lady Byron and final departure from his country."

Lord Byron thus refers to their early acquaintance at school: "I was then just fourteen. You were almost the first of my Harrow friends—certainly the first in my esteem, if not in date . . . .

How well I recollect the present of your first flights! There is another circumstance you do not know; the *first lines* I ever attempted at Harrow were addressed to you."

Such was the commencement of this remarkable friendship. The two boys must have been very dissimilar in disposition as they became such different men. Byron alludes to their difference in conduct when at school; but their characters were not then formed. Moreover, they had several bonds of sympathy; both were fond of poetry and romance; both had warm and affectionate dispositions; both were devoted to study; and both were —lame. When William Harness was little more than an infant, he was playing with and clinging about some curious carving on the posts of an old oaken bedstead which were tied together and lying against the wall. By some unfortunate movement he caused the heavy mass to fall, and it came down with crushing weight upon his foot. He never entirely recovered this accident, and he always felt a slight pain in walking; but such was his spirit and perseverance that in after-life he became a good pedestrian.

After the explanation to which Mr. Harness alludes and Byron's letter of apology, they again became friends. "Our intercourse," writes Mr. Harness, "was renewed and continued from that

time till his going abroad. Whatever faults Lord Byron might have had towards others, to myself he was always uniformly affectionate. I have many slights and neglects towards him to reproach myself with; but, on his part, I cannot call to mind, during the whole course of our intimacy, a single instance of caprice or unkindness.

Before leaving England for Greece, in 1809, Byron made a most gratifying request of his friend:—

"I am going abroad, if possible, in the Spring, and before I depart I am collecting the pictures of my most intimate school-fellows. I have already a few, and shall want yours, or my cabinet will be incomplete. I have employed one of the best miniature painters of the day to take them—of course at my own expense, as I never allow my acquaintances to incur the least expenditure to gratify a whim of mine. To mention this may seem indelicate; but when I tell you a friend of ours first refused to sit, under the idea that he was to disburse on the occasion, you will see that it is necessary to state these preliminaries to prevent the recurrence of any similar mistake. I shall see you in time, and will carry you to the limner. It will be a tax on your patience for a week, but pray excuse it, as it is possible the resemblance may be the sole trace I shall be able to pre-

serve of our past friendship and present acquaintance. Just now it seems foolish enough; but in a few years, when some of us are dead, and others are separated by inevitable circumstances, it will be a kind of satisfaction to retain, in these images of the living, the idea of our former selves, and to contemplate, in the resemblance of the dead, all that remains of judgment, feeling, and a host of passions.

"But all this will be dull enough for you, and so good night; and to end my chapter, or rather my homily,

"Believe me,
"My dear Harness,
"Yours most affectionately,
"BYRON."

The following letter from school is interesting from its date, and as showing the early intimacy between William Harness and Miss Mitford:

"Harrow, 31st July, 1808.

"My dear Doctor Mitford,

"I was impudent enough to invite myself to your house, and you were kind enough to say that I should be welcome; it was afterwards settled I should come to the Races. I am too selfish to let such an opportunity slip, and fully intend to bore

you for some time at Grasely. I hope Mrs. Mitford will not turn me out. Will you then, my dear Sir, let me know when the Races are, and when I shall be least troublesome to you; for as soon as you appoint I shall come down and harass Miss Mitford to death! My father and grandmother send their love and compliments to Mrs. and Miss Mitford and yourself. I shall keep all my civil things till we meet.

"Believe me,

"Yours sincerely,

"W. HARNESS."

Mr. Harness observed on this occasion that the Mitfords' mode of living was greatly altered. Dr. Mitford's extravagance had almost consumed the golden gift which the Fairies had showered upon his little daughter. A change was visible in the household; the magnificent butler had disappeared; and the young Harrow boy by no means admired the shabby equipage in which they were to exhibit themselves on the race-course.

From Harrow, William Harness proceeded to Christ College, Cambridge, and while there he found time not only for classical and scientific study, but also for the perusal of the light and ornamental literature of the day. Those were, indeed, some of his happiest hours, when, full of the

enthusiasm of youth, and surrounded by kindred spirits—many of whom were destined hereafter to write their names on the roll of fame—he read aloud the works of some popular author, and listened to the criticism which its sentiments elicited. Mr. Harness was an excellent reader; his voice was soft and his emphasis correct; and, as he was always ready to oblige, his services in this respect were constantly put in requisition. His strength was fortunately equal to the task, and he sometimes read aloud as much as three volumes in a single day.

After Byron's return from Greece, we find the following proof of his faithful remembrance in one of his letters to his friend: "I have not changed in all my ramblings: Harrow, and of course yourself, never left me, and the

'Dulces reminisciter Argos'

attended me to the very spot to which that sentence alludes in the mind of the fallen Argive. Our intimacy commenced before we began to date at all, and it rests with you to continue it till the hour which must number it and me with the things that were."

Shortly before Mr. Harness took his degree, he received an invitation to Newstead; and his stay there must have been one of unusual interest and

pleasure: this is the account which he gives of his visit.

"When Byron returned, with the MS. of the first two cantos of 'Childe Harold' in his portmanteau, I paid him a visit at Newstead. It was winter—dark, dreary weather—the snow upon the ground; and a straggling, gloomy, depressing, partially-inhabited place the Abbey was. Those rooms, however, which had been fitted up for residence were so comfortably appointed, glowing with crimson hangings, and cheerful with capacious fires, that one soon lost the melancholy feeling of being domiciled in the wing of an extensive ruin. Many tales are related or fabled of the orgies which, in the Poet's early youth, had made clamorous these ancient halls of the Byrons. I can only say that nothing in the shape of riot or excess occurred when I was there. The only other visitor was Dr. Hodgson, the translator of Juvenal,* and nothing could be more quiet and regular than the course of our days. Byron was retouching, as the sheets passed through the press, the stanzas of 'Childe Harold.' Hodgson was at work in getting out the ensuing number of the 'Monthly Review,' of which he was principal editor. I was reading for my degree. When we met, our general talk was of poets and poetry —of who could or who could not write; but it

* Afterwards Provost of Eton.

occasionally rose into very serious discussions on religion. Byron, from his early education in Scotland, had been taught to identify the principles of Christianity with the extreme dogmas of Calvinism. His mind had thus imbibed a most miserable prejudice, which appeared to be the only obstacle to his hearty acceptance of the Gospel. Of this error we were most anxious to disabuse him. The chief weight of the argument rested with Hodgson, who was older, a good deal, than myself. I cannot even now—at a distance of more than fifty years—recall those conversations without a deep feeling of admiration for the judicious zeal and affectionate earnestness (often speaking with tears in his eyes) which Dr. Hodgson evinced in his advocacy of the truth. The only difference, except perhaps in the subjects talked about, between our life at Newstead Abbey and that of the quiet country families around us, was the hours we kept. It was, as I have said, winter, and the days were cold; and, as nothing tempted us to rise early, we got up late. This flung the routine of the day rather backward, and we did not go early to bed. My visit to Newstead lasted about three weeks, when I returned to Cambridge to take my degree."

Notwithstanding the many valuable friendships which Mr. Harness formed at Cambridge, it was un-

fortunate for him, with regard to his success, that he had not chosen the sister University. He had no taste whatever for mathematics, and he found that at Cambridge they were everything. The Graces were kept at a decorous distance by interminable lines of squares and triangles, and no tuneful reeds then grew beside the Cam, except a few which—raised at Eton—had been transplanted to the Royal Nursery of Kings. The lovers of literature, though happy in one another, found themselves in a barren and delightless country; and Byron, with characteristic boldness, spoke of his Alma Mater as nothing short of a "harsh beldam." Mr. Harness was one of these exiles from Parnassus. He shared Miss Mitford's distaste for the dry formulas and inevitable deductions of science, but loved the study of nature and of human life in its ever-varying phases and colours. If there was anything which attracted him more than Poetry, it was Art, and he arrived at so considerable a proficiency in Painting that many hoped he would make it his profession, and predicted for him a successful career. But he was animated by a still higher and nobler ambition—that of elevating not only the taste but the moral feelings of men, and of endeavouring to raise the human mind to the investigation of something still brighter than even the physical creation. He desired to "go on

unto perfection." Poetry and Art should be but the handmaids of religion, to bear us with angels' wings to higher and more spiritual truths. Speaking of the influence of refined and ornamental literature, he observes:

"To represent Christianity to the imagination as a blight that withers all the flowers which the hand of a bountiful Providence has so liberally scattered around us, is to disturb the harmony which subsists between the word and the works of the Creator. The exclusive system—following up the principle of separating its disciples from everything which interests the generality of men—prescribes an absolute rejection of what it designates as worldly literature. This system, if strictly followed, would effect the annihilation of all the Arts and Sciences which refine our nature, which raise the level of the intellect and cultivate the taste, and which fit the understanding for the profitable reception of better things.

"Again, the highest perfection to which we can attain, is the perfect cultivation of all and each of our faculties, as well intellectual as moral. Those faculties are cultivated by exercise, and as each is called into action by some different pursuit or study, it is by giving a certain moderate degree of variety to our studies and pursuits that all can receive that portion of exercise which is essential

for their cultivation. Now, there is no Art or Science which does not bring intellectual profit to the man who has mastered it. There is no species of literature (except, of course, such as are of an infidel or immoral tendency) which may not conduce to the cultivation of some talent which the Almighty has implanted within us, and thus assist us, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in making greater reaches towards that perfection which is set before us as the ultimate object of our pursuit.

"There is one objection—a very serious one—to the rigid, ascetic, pharisaic system in this respect. Such overstrained austerity always prepares the way for the grossest depravity. Count Struensee, in his Confessions, mentions the strictness with which he was brought up in his youth as the principal cause of his subsequent vices. Our whole nation, indeed, afforded a most striking demonstration of the evils consequent on too severe and puritanical a discipline, when, after the formal rigours of the Commonwealth, the people suddenly flung off the mask, and abandoned themselves to those excesses which followed the Restoration."

It is a pleasing testimony to find that Dr. Bland, who had been Mr. Harness's tutor at Harrow, continued aferwards to be his personal friend, and frequently corresponded with him on literary sub-

jects. It would appear from the following letter, that the Doctor had some taste for more modern poetry than that of his celebrated "Greek Anthology:"

"Kenilworth, 22nd March, 1821.

"My dear Harness,

"My work has been nominally published for two weeks and two days; really, I don't believe it is published yet. How helpless am I, at this distance from head-quarters! Can you—will you—assist me in ascertaining whether it was advertised in the 'Chronicle,' 'Courier,' 'Times' and 'Herald?' Do me this favour by calling at the Royal Institution and looking over the files of the newspapers; and again, in writing to me on this subject, just say whether you think the work published, in the sense of *palam factum*. As for writing tales, God knows, my dear friend, I feel but too far—too much inclined to indulge in this idle, heedless passion. I dream of cascades and that βάθος ὕλης so sweet, so inspiring, and so profitless, unless the dream be painted by more able brushes. No; should this work succeed, should the soothing breath of 'Well done!' speak comfort to my almost frozen heart, my vocation is irrevocably fixed, and the year rolls not away, provided I have health, unproductive of something more

genial than 'Lord St. George.' This latter, however, is but a too faithful picture of a country Barony; it is exact. If it fails, it fails for want of spirit, variety, wit, gravity, the intangible essence—in short, the graces necessary to verse. Who has read it? Do you know, and can you report any opinions? I mean, faithfully report them—ay, in all their asperities! Let me hear from you, my dear Harness; and will you enclose for me the lines of Lord Byron to which you allude on the subject of Lord C——? I have never seen them, and think they might do me good.

"Most affectionately yours,

R. BLAND."

CHAPTER II.

MR. HARNESS ENTERS THE MINISTRY. — HIS HAPPINESS IN A COUNTRY PARISH.—DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN LORD AND LADY BYRON.—BYRON'S ECCENTRICITY. — INJURIOUS CHARACTER OF HIS LATER WORKS. — MR. HARNESS APPOINTED BOYLE LECTURER.

Mr. Harness did not enter the ministry with any view to worldly advantage. He was not ignorant of the fact that the labourer in the vineyard is but seldom a partaker of its fruit. So thoroughly did he understand the prospects of a clergyman in the Church of England, that he said he should have hesitated to follow his inclinations had he not had some expectations of independent means.* But no prudential obstacle interposing, and having the full sanction of his parents, he was ordained to the curacy of Kilmeston near Alresford, shortly after his graduating at Cambridge. Such a change, from a brilliant intellectual society to a retired curacy,

* His grandmother, however, took a different view, and told him that a curate required a very small income. "He should keep a horse," she said, "and his horse should keep him."

where his books were his only companions and his country walks his only relaxation, would have been to some insufferably depressing; but to him, on the contrary, those tranquil days seemed some of the happiest of his life; and he was more than content to remain,

"The world forgetting, by the world forgot."

He afterwards removed to Dorking; but it was only upon the urgent remonstrances of his father, who was unwilling to see his talents thus obscured, that he consented to leave his sphere of quiet usefulness, and enter upon the arduous labours of a London cure.

Meanwhile, Mr. Harness's friendly intercourse with Lord Byron was not interrupted, though carried on under some disadvantages. The Poet was prevented from dedicating "Childe Harold" to him, "for fear it should injure him in his profession." And it is evident that in some of his letters Mr. Harness reproved him for his thoughtlessness and dissipation.

"You censure my life, Harness," Byron writes in reply. "When I compare myself with these men, my elders and my betters, I really begin to conceive myself a monument of prudence—a walking statue—without feeling or failing; and yet the world in general hath given me a proud pre-eminence over them in profligacy!"

"From this time," writes Mr. Harness, "our paths lay much asunder. Byron returned to London. His poem was published. The success was instantaneous; and he 'awoke one morning and found himself famous.' I was in orders, and living an almost solitary life in a country curacy; but we kept up a rather rapid interchange of letters. He sent me his poems as they now appeared in rather quick succession; and during my few weeks' holidays in London we saw one another very often of a morning at each other's rooms, and not unfrequently again in society of an evening. So far, and for these few years, all that I saw or heard of his career was bright and prosperous: kindness and poetry at home, smiles and adulation abroad. But then came his marriage; and then the rupture with his wife; and then his final departure from England. He became a victim of that revolution of popular feeling which is ever incident to the spoilt children of society, when envy and malice obtain a temporary ascendancy, and succeed in knocking down and trampling any idol of the day beneath their feet, who may be wanting in the moral courage required to face and out-brave them.

Such was not the spirit that animated Byron. He could not bear to look on the altered countenances of his acquaintances. To his susceptible temperament and generous feelings, the reproach

of having ill-used a woman must have been poignant in the extreme. It was repulsive to his chivalrous character as a gentleman; it belied all he had written of the devoted fervour of his attachments; and rather than meet the frowns and sneers which awaited him in the world, as many a less sensitive man might have done, he turned his back on them and fled. He would have drawn himself up, and crossed his arms and curled his lip, and looked disdainfully on any amount of clamorous hostility; but he stole away from the ignominy of being silently cut. His whole course of conduct, at this crisis of his life, was an inconsiderate mistake. He should have remained to learn what the accusations against him really were; to expose the exaggerations, if not the falsehoods, of the grounds they rested on; or, at all events, to have quietly abided the time when the London world should have become wearied of repeating its vapid scandals, and returned to its senses respecting him. That change of feeling did come—and not long after his departure from England—but he was at a distance, and could not be persuaded to return to take advantage of it.

Of the matrimonial quarrel I personally know nothing; nor, with the exception of Dr. Lushington, do I believe that there is anybody living who has any certain knowledge about the matter. The

marriage was never one of reasonable promise. The bridegroom and the bride were ill-assorted. They were two only children, and two *spoilt* children. I was acquainted with Lady Byron as Miss Milbanke. The parties of Lady Milbanke, her mother, were frequent and agreeable, and composed of that mixture of fashion, literature, science, and art, than which there is no better society. The daughter was not without a certain amount of prettiness or cleverness; but her manner was stiff and formal, and gave one the idea of her being self-willed and self-opinionated. She was almost the only young, pretty, well-dressed girl we ever saw who carried no cheerfulness along with her. I seem to see her now, moving slowly along her mother's drawing-rooms, talking to scientific men and literary women, without a tone of emotion in her voice or the faintest glimpse of a smile upon her countenance. A lady who had been on intimate terms with her from their mutual childhood once said to me, "If Lady Byron has a heart, it is deeper seated and harder to get at than anybody else's heart whom I have ever known." And though several of my friends whose regard it was no slight honour to have gained—as Mrs. Siddons, Joanna Baillie, Maria Edgeworth, and others of less account, — were never heard to speak of Lady Byron except in terms of admiration and attach-

ment, it is certain that the impression which she produced on the majority of her acquaintance was unfavourable: they looked upon her as a reserved and frigid sort of being whom one would rather cross the room to avoid than be brought into conversation with unnecessarily. Such a person, whatever quality might have at first attracted him —(could it have been her coldness?)—was not likely to acquire or retain any very powerful hold upon Byron. At the beginning of their married life, when first they returned to London society together, one seldom saw two young persons who appeared to be more devoted to one another than they were. At parties, he would be seen hanging over the back of her chair, scarcely talking to anybody else, eagerly introducing his friends to her, and, if they did not go away together, himself handing her to her carriage. This outward show of tenderness, so far as my memory serves me, was observed and admired as exemplary, till after the birth of their daughter. From that time the world began to drop its voice into a tone of compassion when speaking of Lady Byron, and to whisper tales of the misery she was suffering—poor thing—on account of the unkindness of her husband.

The first instances of his ill-usage which were heard, were so insignificant as to be beneath recording. "The poor lady had never had a com-

fortable meal since their marriage." "Her husband had no fixed hour for breakfast, and was always too late for dinner." "At his express desire, she had invited two elderly ladies* to meet them in her opera-box. Nothing could be more courteous than his manner to them, while they remained; but no sooner had they gone than he began to annoy his wife by venting his ill-humour, in a strain of bitterest satire, against the dress and manners of her friends." There were some relations of Lady Byron whom, after repeated refusals, he had reluctantly consented to dine with. When the day arrived he insisted on her going alone, alleging his being unwell as an excuse for his absence. It was summer time. Forty years ago people not only dined earlier than they do now, but by daylight; and after the assembled party were seated at table, he amused himself by driving backwards and forwards opposite the dining-room windows.†

There was a multitude of such nonsensical stories as these, which one began to hear soon after Ada's birth; and I believe I have told the worst of them. No doubt, as the things occurred, they must have been vexatious enough, but they do not

* Mrs. Joanna Baillie and her sister.

† The above gossip all came to me from different friends of Lady Byron.

amount to grievous wrongs. They were faults of temper, not moral delinquencies; a thousand of them would not constitute an injury. Nor does one know to what extent they may have been provoked. They would, in all probability, have ceased, had they been gently borne with—and perhaps were only repeated because the culprit was amused by witnessing their effects. At all events they were no more than a sensible woman, who had either a proper feeling for her husband's reputation, or a due consideration of her own position, would have readily endured; and a really good wife would never have allowed herself to talk about them. And yet it was by Lady Byron's friends, and as coming immediately from her, that I used to hear them. The complaints, at first so trifling, gradually acquired a more serious character. "Poor Lady Byron was afraid of her life." "Her husband slept with loaded pistols by his bedside, and a dagger under his pillow." Then there came rumours of cruelty—no one knew of what kind, or how severe. Nothing was definitely stated. But it was on all hands allowed to be "very bad—very bad indeed." And as there was nothing to be known, everybody imagined what they pleased.

But whatever Lord Byron's treatment of his wife may have been, it could not have been all evil. Any injuries she suffered must have occurred

during moody and angry fits of temper. They could not have been habitual or frequent. His conduct was not of such a description as to have utterly extinguished whatever love she might have felt at her marriage, or to have left any sense of terror or aversion behind it. This is evident from facts. Years after they had met for the last time, Lady Byron went with Mrs. Jameson, from whom I repeat the circumstance, to see Thorwaldsen's statue of her husband, which was at Sir Richard Westmacott's studio. After looking at it in silence for a few moments, the tears came into her eyes, and she said to her companion, "It is very beautiful, but not so beautiful as my *dear* Byron." However interrupted by changes of caprice or irritability, the general course of her husband's conduct must have been gentle and tender, or it never would, after so long a cessation of intercourse, have left such kindly impressions behind it. I have, indeed, reason to believe that these feelings of affectionate remembrance lingered in the heart of Lady Byron to the last. Not a fortnight before her death, I dined in company with an old lady who was at the time on a visit to her. On this lady's returning home, and mentioning whom she had met, Lady Byron evinced great curiosity to learn what subjects we had talked about, and what I had heard of them, "because I had been

such a friend of her husband's." This instance of fond remembrance, after an interval of more than forty years, in a woman of no very sensitive nature —a woman of more intellect than feeling—conveys to my mind no slight argument in defence of Byron's conduct as a husband. His wife, though unrelenting, manifestly regretted his loss. May not some touch of remorse for the exile to which she had dismissed him—for the fame over which she had cast a cloud—for the energies which she had diverted from their course of useful action in the Senate,* to be wasted in no honourable idleness abroad—and for the so early death to which her unwife-like conduct doomed him, have mingled its bitterness with the pain of that regret?

But what do I know of Byron? The ill I will speak of presently. Personally, I know nothing but good of him. Of what he became in his foreign banishment, when removed from all his natural ties and hereditary duties, I, personally, am ignorant. In all probability he deteriorated; he would have been more than human if he had not. But when I was in the habit of familiarly seeing him, he was kindness itself. At a time when Coleridge was in great embarrassment, Rogers, when calling on Byron, chanced to mention it. He immediately

* He had made some good speeches in the House.

went to his writing-desk, and brought back a cheque for a hundred pounds, and insisted on its being forwarded to Coleridge. "I did not like taking it," said Rogers, who told me the story, "for I knew that he was in want of it himself." His servants he treated with a gentle consideration for their feelings which I have seldom witnessed in any other, and they were devoted to him. At Newstead there was an old man who had been butler to his mother, and I have seen Byron, as the old man waited behind his chair at dinner, pour out a glass of wine and pass it to him when he thought we were too much engaged in conversation to observe what he was doing. The transaction was a thing of custom; and both parties seemed to flatter themselves that it was clandestinely effected. A hideous old woman, who had been brought in to nurse him when he was unwell at one of his lodgings, and whom few would have cared to retain about them longer than her services were required, was carried with him, in improved attire, to his chambers in the Albany, and was seen, after his marriage, gorgeous in black silk at his house in Piccadilly. She had done him a service, and he could not forget it. Of his attachment to his friends, no one can read Moore's life and entertain a doubt. He required a great deal from them—not more, perhaps, than he, from the abundance of

his love, freely and fully gave—but more than they had to return. The ardour of his nature must have been in a normal state of disappointment. He imagined higher qualities in them than they possessed, and must very often have found his expectations sadly balked by the dulness of talk, the perversity of taste, or the want of enthusiasm, which he encountered on a better or rather longer acquaintance. But, notwithstanding, I have never yet heard anybody complain that Byron had once appeared to entertain a regard for him, and had afterwards capriciously cast him off.

Now, after these good and great qualities, I revert to the evil of Byron's character and conduct. And here, if he were bad, were there no extenuations, derived from the peculiarities of his position and education, to be pleaded for him? Was he not better, instead of worse, than most young men have proved who were similarly circumstanced? He had virtually never known a father's love, or a mother's tenderness. He was from early childhood wholly cut off from those motives to virtue, and those restraints from vice, which, amid a band of brothers and sisters, grow up around us with the family affections. Home is the only school in which right principles and generous feelings find a genial soil and attain a natural growth. Without a home the boy sees nothing, knows nothing, considers

nothing, and feels for nothing but himself; and a home Byron never had. The domestic charities and their ameliorating influences were only known to him by name. He was from boyhood his own master; and would it have been strange, if, with strong passions, an untutored will, fervent imagination, and no one with authority to control him, he was sometimes led astray? But during the time he was in London society, what young men were there, with the same liberty to range at will as he, who were less absorbed by its dissipations? Who among them abstracted so much time from the fascinations of the world as he, to study as he studied, and to write as he wrote? I have little doubt, though I don't know it, that in the season of his unparalleled success he was not likely to have been more rigid in his conduct than his companions were in their principles. But it is at least extraordinary that, while thus courted and admired, if his life was as licentious as some have represented, the only scandal which disturbed the decorum of society, and with which Byron's name is connected, did not originate in any action of his, but in the insane and unrequited passion of a woman.

Byron had one pre-eminent fault—a fault which must be considered as deeply criminal by every one who does not, as I do, believe it to have resulted from monomania. He had a morbid

love of a bad reputation. There was hardly an offence of which he would not, with perfect indifference, accuse himself. An old schoolfellow, who met him on the Continent, told me that he would continually write paragraphs against himself in the foreign journals, and delight in their republication by the English newspapers as in the success of a practical joke. When anybody has related anything discreditable of Byron, assuring me that it must be true, for he had heard it from himself, I have always felt that he could not have spoken with authority, and that, in all probability, the tale was a pure invention. If I could remember, and were willing to repeat, the various misdoings which I have from time to time heard him attribute to himself, I could fill a volume. But I never believed them. I very soon became aware of this strange idiosyncrasy. It puzzled me to account for it; but there it was—a sort of diseased and distorted vanity. The same eccentric spirit would induce him to report things which were false with regard to his family, which anybody else would have concealed though true. He told me more than once that his father was insane and killed himself. I shall never forget the manner in which he first told me this. While washing his hands, and singing a gay Neapolitan air, he stopped, looked round at me, and said, "There always was

a madness in the family." Then after continuing his washing and his song, as if speaking of a matter of the slightest indifference, "My father cut his throat." The contrast between the tenor of the subject and the levity of the expression was fearfully painful: it was like a stanza of "Don Juan." In this instance, I had no doubt that the fact was as he related it, but in speaking of it only a few years since to an old lady* in whom I had perfect confidence, she assured me that it was not so; that Mr. Byron, who was her cousin, had been extremely wild, but was quite sane and had died quietly in his bed. What Byron's reasons could have been for thus calumniating, not only himself, but the blood that was flowing in his veins, who can divine? But, for some reason or other, it seemed to be his determined purpose to keep himself unknown to the great body of his fellow-creatures—to present himself to their view in moral masquerade, and to identity himself in their imaginations with Childe Harold and the Corsair, between which characters and his own—as God and education had made it—the most microscopic inspection would fail to discern a single point of resemblance.

Except this love of an ill-name—this tendency to malign himself—this hypocrisy reversed, I have no personal knowledge whatever of any evil act or

* Mrs. Villiers, Lord Clarendon's mother.

evil disposition of Lord Byron's. I once said this to a gentleman* who was well acquainted with Lord Byron's London life. He expressed himself astonished at what I said. "Well," I replied, "do you know any harm of him but what he told you himself?" "Oh, yes, a hundred things!" "I don't want you to tell me a hundred things, I shall be content with one." Here the conversation was interrupted. We were at dinner—there was a large party, and the subject was again renewed at table. But afterwards in the drawing-room, Mr. Drury came up to me and said, "I have been thinking of what you were saying at dinner. I do *not* know any harm of Byron but what he has told me of himself."

Mr. Harness's testimony to the good points in Byron's character is especially valuable as it comes from one who was not in the least blinded by the brilliancy of his genius. So delicately sensitive, indeed, was Mr. Harness's nature, that he always, as he confessed, felt Byron's poetry to be a little too "strong" for him. He attributed a large part of Byron's reckless conduct in after-life to the misfortune of his ill-assorted marriage. "It was brought about," he observed, "by well-meaning friends, who knew that Byron wanted money and thought they were consulting his best interests." He formed the alliance, as is often the case, be-

* The Rev. Henry Drury.

cause other people liked it; but they did not take into consideration how many elements are required to constitute the happiness of sensient human beings. Lady Byron was a person entirely deficient in tact and reflection, and made no allowances for the usual eccentricities of genius. In some periods of our history she might have aspired to a real crown of martyrdom, for she was a Puritan in creed, and an unflinching advocate of her own views. Miss Mitford justly asks, "Why did she marry Byron? His character was well known, and he was not a deceiver!" Possibly she hoped to make an illustrious convert of him, or thought that she might at once share his celebrity and restrain his follies. If so, she greatly overrated her influence, and ignored the perversity of human nature. Byron had a childish weakness for dramatic effect and excitement, and it was his habit to amuse himself at times by indulging in fantastical rhapsodies, full of tragic extravagance. Harness knew these occasions, and merely lapsed into silence, and when the poet found that no one was horrified or delighted, he very soon came to the end of his performance, But Lady Byron was too conscientious, or too severe, to allow the fire thus to die out. She took seriously every word he uttered, weighed it in her precise balance, and could not avoid expressing her condemnation of his principles and her abhorrence

of his language. This fanned the flame, increased his irritation, or added zest to his amusement. Whatever crime she accused him of he was not only ready to admit, but even to trump by the confession of some greater enormity. Few of us have sufficient taste and delicacy for the office of a censor, or sufficient humility to profit by rebuke; but in the present case the difficulties were unusually great. "There can be no doubt," observed Mr. Harness, "that Byron was a little 'maddish.'" He was afflicted with a more than usual share of that eccentricity which so often turns aside the keen edge of genius; but he was amiable and might have been led, though he would not be driven.

Mr. Harness had no communication with Byron during the latter years of his life. He nevertheless always continued to take a kindly view of the character of his old school-fellow and college friend, and endeavoured to make every allowance for his conduct; but at the same time we must not suppose that he permitted any personal feeling to interfere with his sense of right, or to prevent his denouncing the principles advocated in his friend's later writings. We have already noticed his disapproval of Byron's conduct, and as it became more marked, he spoke in stronger language. Their intimacy then ceased, and Byron recklessly abandoned himself to those dissipations which ended in his early death. In

1822, Mr. Harness was appointed Boyle Lecturer by the University of Cambridge; and his duty was "to be ready to satisfy such real scruples as any may have concerning matters of religion, and to answer such new objections and difficulties as may be started." Lord Byron's works were then at the height of their popularity; and as some of them seemed to be exercising a very pernicious influence, Mr. Harness selected for special consideration the poem* in which an attempt was made to represent God as responsible for the origin of Sin.

"By a fiction of no ordinary power," he observes, "the rebellious son of a rebellious father is disclosed to the imagination as upon the borders of Paradise, and within the shadowy regions of the dead, holding personal communion with the spiritual enemy of man. Each is represented as advocating the cause of his impiety to the partial judgment of his companion in iniquity. Miserable they are; but still they are arrogant and stern, remorseless and unsubdued by misery. For them adversity has no sweet or hallowed uses. While they make mutual confession of the wretchedness their sin has caused them, they appear to glory in it, as if ennobled by its magnitude and exalted by its presumption. To their licentious apprehensions all excellence appears corrupted and reversed. They

* "Cain."

call good evil, and evil they call good. Pride is virtue, and rebellion duty. Lucifer is the friend, and Jehovah is the enemy of man; and while they reciprocate the arguments of a bewildering sophistry, the benevolence of the Deity is arraigned, as if He rejoiced in the affliction of His creatures, first conferred an efficacy on the temptation and then delighted to exact the penalties of transgression."

Byron had attempted to justify himself by asserting that he had expressed no sentiments worse than those which were to be found in Milton; but even were this the case (Mr. Harness observed), there would be a peculiar danger in reproducing them in a specious form, and in times when faith was already obscured: "The danger is heightened by the peculiar character of the times. Had the allegations of these malignant spirits been preferred in an age of more general and fervent piety, there had been little peril in their publication. They had only awakened in the breast of the reader a more entire abhorrence of the beings by whom they were entertained and uttered. It was thus in the days of Milton. Every taunt of Satan was then opposed by the popular spirit of devotion, and armed against his cause the deepest and the holiest affections of the heart. But the spirit of those times has past. Zeal has yielded to indifference, and faith to scepticism. We have become so impatient of the re-

straint of Christianity, and so indulgent to every argument that endows our inclinations with an apology for sin, that few and transient are the feelings of religious gratitude which are offended by the impieties of Cain or Lucifer, and their appeal against the dispensations of Almighty Providence is calmly heard and favourably deliberated; for, in the skilful extenuation of *their* guilt, we appear to listen to the arguments that soothe us with the justification of our own. There is also a danger in the manner with which these antiquated cavils are revived and recommended. United with the dramatic interest and the seductions of poetry, they obtain a wider circulation. They gain an introduction to the studies of the young; they pass into the hands of that wide class of readers, who only find in literature another variety of dissipation, and who, after having eagerly received the contagion of demoralizing doubts, would indolently cast aside the cold metaphysical essay that conveyed their refutation."

Byron's friendship for Mr. Harness, who even during their intimacy did not scruple to reprove and oppose his principles, was perhaps the most pleasing episode in his private career; and his accusers should know that, during the whole of their correspondence, he never penned a single line to his friend which might not have been addressed to the most delicate woman.

CHAPTER III.

SHAKESPEARE.—RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE DRAMA.—THE ELIZABETHAN AGE.—MR. HARNESS VISITS STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.—EDITS SHAKESPEARE.—HIS CHARACTER OF THE POET.—CONTEMPORARY STANDARD OF MORALITY.—EARLY THEATRES.—CRITIQUE ON "THE TEMPEST."—THE KEMBLES IN AMERICA.

If any gifted men have been insensible to the beauties of Shakespeare, Mr. Harness was not among their number. On the contrary, he was a devoted student of the writings of the great dramatist, and ever found that the deeper that mine was worked, the richer was the ore which was brought to light. In such feelings of admiration he coincided with the views of some of the most eminent and learned divines, especially with those of Dr. Sortin and Bishop Warburton.* "Shakespeare," writes Mr. Harness, "was not only habitually conversant with the chronicles of his country, but had also deeply imbibed the Scriptures."

History teaches that theatrical representations originally partook of a ceremonial character. They

* He edited Shakespeare's works.

were performed in honour of Dionysus, the great symbolic deity of Earth, Heaven, and Hell, before he received, in degenerate days, the unworthy name and attributes of Bacchus. The plays of Æschylus, the father of Tragedy, are so full of sublime and spiritual conceptions, that, notwithstanding the dim light in which his creations move, they convey high instruction and admonition; indeed, were it not for the glory of his poetry, he might incur the imputation of being distastefully moralizing and transcendental. In the same way, we find that Comedy arose from a joyous festival at harvest, or rather at vintage-home, in which the grape-gatherers acknowledged the bounty of the Giver of all good with mystic dances, thanksgivings, and sacrifices; and ignorant and misguided as those worshippers were, no one can read the literature of their times without feeling convinced that their piety, though false in direction, was in many respects of a genuine and religious character.

Notwithstanding a long obscuration in the latter age of Greece and Rome, the drama never entirely lost its instructive and ethical character; and we find the Latin church availing itself of it in the early part of the Middle Ages, for the representation of the most solemn scenes in our Saviour's sufferings.

Those who have studied the transformations of religion, or, as I should better say, the steps by which false systems have changed into the true, will admit that ancient customs have been very often retained, although their signification has been entirely altered.* The cause of the revival in this case may have been the general recognition of the influence of dramatic action and impersonation; but we may safely affirm that had the uses of the stage been polluted, it would never have been brought into connection with the Christian Church.

Our modern plays long retained a religious character, and even in later years were used as a vehicle for moral instruction. In tracing the rise and progress of the English Drama, we cannot do better than quote Mr. Harness's own words :—

"It is impossible for any art to have attained a more rapid growth than was attained by the art of dramatic writing in this country. The people had indeed been long accustomed to a species of exhibition called 'miracles' or 'mysteries,' founded

* Many instances of adaptation will probably occur to the reader. In the Early Church, we find a great attempt made to encumber Christianity with Jewish ceremonies. The Romanists adopted those of the surrounding Pagans. A remarkable continuance of the sanctity of a locality is traceable at Le Puy; in the floor of the cathedral lies the table-stone of a druidical dolmen; in the walls are fragments of a Roman Temple; it is now Roman Catholic, and, we must hope, will some day be Protestant.

on sacred subjects, and performed by the ministers of religion themselves on the holy festivals in or near the churches, and designed to instruct the ignorant in the leading facts of sacred history.* From the occasional introduction of allegorical characters, such as Faith, Death, Hope, or Sin into these religious dramas, representations of another kind, called 'moralities,' had by degrees arisen, of which the plots were more artificial, regular, and connected, and which were entirely formed of such personifications. But the first rough draught of a regular tragedy and comedy that appeared, Lord Sackville's 'Gorboduc,' and Still's 'Gammer Gurton's Needle,' were not produced till within the latter half of the sixteenth century, and but little more than twenty years previous to Shakespeare's arrival in the metropolis.

"About that time the attention of the public began to be more generally directed to the stage, and it throve admirably beneath the cheerful beams of popularity. The theatrical performances which

* Mr. Harness here adds a note to the effect that the most ancient collection of this kind—the Chester mysteries—were not written by Ralph Higden, as supposed by Warton, Malone and others; but by an earlier Ecclesiastic of Chester, named Randall, and that they were first enacted between 1268 and 1276. In the Harl. MSS., we read: "Exhibited at Chester in 1327, at the expense of the Trading Companies of the City: The 'Fall of Lucifer,' by the Tanners; 'Abraham, Melchisedeck, and Lot,' by the Barbers; the 'Purifica-

had, in the early part of the reign of Elizabeth, been exhibited on temporary stages, erected in such halls or apartments as the actors could procure, or more generally in the yards of the great inns, while the spectators surveyed them from the windows and galleries, began to be established in more convenient and permanent situations. About the year 1569 a regular play-house under the appropriate name of 'The Theatre' was built. It is supposed to have stood somewhere in Blackfriars; and three years after the commencement of this establishment (yielding to her inclination for the amusement of the theatre, and disregarding the remonstrances of the Puritans,) the Queen granted a license and authority to the servants of the Earl of Leicester 'to use, exercise, and occupie the arte and facultie of playinge commedies, tragedies, interludes, stage-playes, as well for the recreation of our lovinge subjects as for our own solace and pleasure, when we shall think good to see them, throughoute our realm of England.' From this time the number of theatres increased with the ripening taste and the increasing demands of the people. Various noble-

tion,' by the Blacksmiths; the 'Temptation,' by the Butchers; 'The Last Supper,' by the Bakers; the 'Descent into Hell,' by the Cooks; the 'Resurrection,' by the Skinners; the 'Ascension,' by the Tailors,' &c." We know not at how early a date these plays were acted in the Latin Church. They were continued in Cornwall after they had lost the support of the clergy.

men had their respective companies of performers, who were associated as their servants, and acted under their protection; and during the period of Shakespeare's theatrical career, not less than seven principal play-houses were open in the metropolis."

Mr. Harness yielded to few in his enthusiasm for Shakespeare. He was wont to say that his plays contained almost everything. In his early years, inspired with youthful ardour, he made a pilgrimage to the birthplace of the great poet, and although he started with the intention of staying there only four days, he ended by remaining five weeks. He was charmed with the place, and spent his time most enjoyably in exploring the beauties of the country, and in visiting the spots hallowed by the dramatist's memory. He told me that at the close of one long summer day, after returning from a walk to Anne Hathaway's cottage, he took out his volume of Shakespeare, which was his constant companion, and opening it at "King John," became completely absorbed in the tragic story. Time flew by rapidly and unheeded, until warned by his waning lamp, he started up and found that it was past midnight. He went to the window; the stars were shining brightly in the clear sky and shedding their thin light over the old gabled houses and lofty elm trees; the night was breezeless, and all was shrouded in

silence. Suddenly the church clock struck one. The deep booming reverberated through the stillness as though it would awake the spirits of the past; the hour and the scene were alike inspired. Mr. Harness thought how "that great man" might have listened to the same solemn stroke, and recalled the lines :—

> "The midnight bell
> Did with his iron tongue and brazen mouth
> Sound 'one' unto the drowsy race of night."*

Mr. Harness found the inscription on Shakespeare's monument in a very imperfect condition. He had it restored at his own expense. Above the epitaph by Ben Jonson is the line :—

> "Judicio Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,"

the false quantity in which offended Mr. Harness's classical ear, and he proposed to substitute "Sophoclem" for "Socratem." The mistake might have been due to some ignorant copyist; and the genius of Shakespeare seemed as much allied to that of the great tragedian as to that of the philosopher. He much regretted that the original colouring of the bust had not been allowed to remain.

His Edition of Shakespeare was published by Mr. Harness immediately after his appointment to St.

* Act iii.; Scene 3.

Pancras. It had been prepared when he was residing at Hampstead, and had no 'parochial cure, but only Sunday duty in London. He did not confine himself in his undertaking to merely adding notes to the text of the Poet; but also prefixed a Life, which occupied the first volume.* This biography was remarkable for its scrupulous impartiality; no such record being in his opinion instructive or valuable, which was not absolutely faithful in all its details, and which did not chronicle the frailties as well as the virtues of its subject. Miss Mitford, in praising the work, says, "I am quite delighted with your edition of Shakespeare. It must do. The 'Life' is like the portrait affixed to it; the old beloved, well-known features which we all have by heart, but inspired with a fresh spirit." She objects, however, to his over-sensitiveness and anxiety to notice all the invidious allegations made against his author's fame. But Mr. Harness thought it unworthy of the character

* Mr. Harness's Edition of Shakespeare was published in 1825, in 8 vols. octavo; a second edition, with plates, appeared in 1830; and a third, with 40 plates by Heath, in 1833. In the latter year also he published an edition in Imperial 4to, one volume, with 100 of Boydell's plates; and a one volume edition in Royal octavo was published in 1836, and again in 1840 and 1842; the last reprint being for the American market. The edition of 1840 is still sometimes to be met with; its only illustration is a very fine engraving of the Chandos portrait.

of the great poet to allow him to gain anything by concealment; and speaking of his early days at Stratford, and of the probability that he assisted his father in the unpoetical trade of a butcher, he emphatically rejects "that absurd spirit of refinement which is only too common among the writers of biography, as well as history, and which induces them to conceal or misrepresent every occurrence which is at all of a humiliating nature, and does not accord with those false and effeminate notions so generally entertained respecting the dignity of that peculiar class of composition." He, at the same time, blames the severity with which Shakespeare's early vagaries were punished by Sir Thomas Lucy. "Every contemporary," he says, "who has spoken of our author, has been lavish in the praise of his temper and disposition. 'The gentle Shakespeare' seems to have been his distinguishing appellation. No slight portion of our enthusiasm for his writings may be traced to the fair picture which they present of the author's character. We love the tenderness of heart, the candour and openness and singleness of mind, the largeness of sentiment, the liberality of opinion, which the whole tenor of his works proves him to have possessed. His faults seem to have been the transient aberrations of a thoughtless moment, which reflection never failed to correct; the ebullition of high spirits might mislead him;

but the principles and the affections never swerved from what was right. Against such a person, the extreme severity of the magistrate should not have been exerted. But the powerful enemy of Shakespeare was not to be appeased; the heart of the Puritan or the game-preserver is very rarely formed of 'penetrable stuff.' Our author fled from the inflexible persecutions of his opponent to seek shelter in the metropolis; and he found friends and wealth and fame where he had only hoped for an asylum. Sir Thomas Lucy remained to enjoy the triumph of his victory, and he yet survives, in the character of Justice Shallow, as the laughing-stock of posterity."*

"Shakespeare's first employment in connexion with the theatre in London presents us with a characteristic picture of the times. He was to receive the horses of those who rode to the performance, and was to hold them until the end of the performance. He became, we are told, such a favourite in this office that every one, when he alighted, called out, 'Will Shakespeare!' and he soon was in such demand that he hired young men

* (Note by Mr. Harness.) "There can be no doubt that Justice Shallow was designed as the representative of the Knight. If the traditional authority of this fact were not quite satisfactory, the description of his coat of arms in the first scene of 'The Merry Wives of Windsor,' which is, with very slight deviation, that of the Lucys, would be sufficient to direct us to the original of the portrait."

to assist him, who would present themselves, saying, 'I am Shakespeare's boy, Sir!' That the above anecdote was really communicated by Pope," adds Mr. Harness, "there is no room to doubt."

"But however inferior," he continues, "was the situation which Shakespeare first occupied, his talents were not long buried in obscurity. He rapidly rose to the first station in the theatre, and by the power of his genius raised our national dramatic poetry, then in its infancy, to the highest state of perfection which it is perhaps capable of reaching."

Speaking of the characters played by Shakespeare, Mr. Harness draws the following conclusions:—"It would appear that the class of characters to which the histrionic exertions of Shakespeare were confined was that of elderly persons—parts rather of declamation than of passion. With a countenance which, if any of his pictures is a genuine resemblance of him, we may adduce that one as our authority for esteeming capable of every variety of expression; with a knowledge of the art which rendered him fit to be the teacher of the first actors of his day, and to instruct Joseph Taylor in the character of 'Hamlet,' and John Lowine in that of 'King Henry the Eighth;' with such admirable qualifications for pre-eminence, we must infer that nothing but some personal defect could have reduced

him to limit the exercise of his powers, and even in youth assume the slow and deliberate motion which is the characteristic of old age. In his minor poems we perhaps trace the origin of this direction of his talents. It appears from two places in his Sonnets that he was lamed by some accident. In the 37th Sonnet he writes:—

'So I made *lame* by Fortune's dearest spite.'

And in the 89th he again alludes to his infirmity, and says,

'Speak of my *lameness*, and I straight will halt.'

This imperfection would necessarily have rendered him unfit to appear as the representative of any characters of youthful ardour, in which rapidity of movement or violence of exertion was demanded, and would oblige him to apply his powers to such parts as were compatible with his measured and impeded action. Malone has most inefficiently attempted to explain away the palpable meaning of the above lines, and adds, 'If Shakespeare was in truth lame, he had it not in his power to *halt occasionally* for this or any other purpose, the defect must have been fixed and permanent.' Not so! Surely many an infirmity of the kind may be skilfully concealed, or only become visible in the moments of hurried movement. Either Sir Walter Scott or Lord Byron might, without any impro-

priety, have written the verses in question; they would have been applicable to either of them. Indeed the lameness of Lord Byron was exactly such as Shakespeare's might have been; and I remember, as a boy, that he selected those speeches for declamation which would not constrain him to the use of such exertions as might obtrude the defect of his person into notice."

These observations are interesting when we remember the writer's experience in his own infirmity.

Mr. Harness was accustomed to say that all that Shakespeare wrote was good, but that many passages were attributed to him which were not authentic. He explains his views on the corruptions of the text in the following words:

"If Shakespeare still appears to us the first of poets, it is in spite of every possible disadvantage to which his own sublime contempt of applause had exposed his fame, from the ignorance, the avarice, or the officiousness of his early editors. To these causes it is to be ascribed that the writings of Shakespeare have come down to us in a state more imperfect than those of any other author of his time, and requiring every exertion of critical skill to illustrate and amend them. That so little should be known with certainty of the history of his life was the natural consequence of the events which immediately followed his dissolution. It is

true that the age in which he flourished was little curious about the lives of literary men; but our ignorance must not wholly be attributed to the want of curiosity in the immediate successors of the poet. The public mind soon became violently agitated in the conflict of opposite opinions. Every individual was called upon to take his stand as the partisan of a religious or political faction. Each was too intimately occupied with his personal interest to find leisure for so peaceful a pursuit as tracing the biography of a poet. If this was the case during the time of civil commotion, under the Puritanical dynasty of Cromwell the stage was totally destroyed; and the life of a dramatic author, however eminent his merits, would not only have been considered as a subject undeserving of inquiry, but only worthy of contempt and abomination. The genius of Shakespeare was dear to Milton and to Dryden; to a few lofty minds and gifted spirits; but it was dead to the multitude of his countrymen, who, in their foolish bigotry, would have considered their very houses polluted if they had contained a copy of his works.

"After the Restoration these severe restrictions were relaxed; and, as is universally the case, the counter-action was correspondent to the action. The nation suddenly exchanged the rigid austerity of Puritanism for the extreme of pro-

fligacy and licentiousness. When the Drama was revived, it existed no longer to inculcate such lessons of morality as were enforced by the contrition of Macbeth, the purity of Isabel, or the suffering constancy of Imogen; but to teach modesty to blush at its own innocence, to corrupt the heart by pictures of debauchery, and to exalt a gay selfishness and daring sensuality above all that is noble in principle and honourable in action. At this period Shakespeare was forgotten. He wrote not for such profligate times. His sentiments would have been met by no correspondent feelings in the breasts of such audiences as were then collected within the walls of the Metropolitan theatres, composed of men who came to hear their vices flattered, and of women masked, ashamed to show their faces at representations which they were sufficiently abandoned to delight in. The jesting, lying, bold intriguing rake, whom Shakespeare had rendered contemptible in Lucio, and hateful in Iachimo, was the very character that the dramatists of Charles's time were painting after the model of the Court favourites, and representing in false colours as a deserving object of approbation. French taste and French morals had banished our author from the stage, and his name had faded from the memory of the people. Tate, in his altered play of "King Lear," mentions the original, in his dedication, as

an obscure piece. The author of the "Tatler," in quoting some lines of "Macbeth," cites them from the disfigured alteration of D'Avenant. The works of Shakespeare were only read by those whom the desire of literary plunder induced to pry into the volumes of antiquated authors, with the hope of discovering some neglected jewels that might be clandestinely transferred to enrich their own poverty of invention; and so little were the productions of the most gifted poet that ever ventured to embark on the varying waters of the imagination known to the generality of his countrymen, that Otway stole the character of the Nurse, and all the love-scenes of "Romeo and Juliet," and published them as his own without the slightest acknowledgment of the obligation or any apprehension of detection. A better taste returned; but when, nearly a century after the death of Shakespeare, Rowe undertook to superintend an edition of his Plays, and to collect the memoirs of his life, the race had passed away from whom any certain recollections of the great national poet might have been gathered, and nothing better was to be obtained than the slight notes of Aubrey, the scattered hints of Oldys, the loose intimations which had escaped from D'Avenant, and the vague reports which Betterton had gleaned in his pilgrimage to Stratford."

The following sketch by Mr. Harness of the manner in which the performances of the theatre were conducted, affords an interesting picture of the times: he was always fond of characteristic details:

"The 'Globe' and the playhouse in 'Blackfriars' were the property of the company to which Shakespeare was himself attached, and by whom all his productions were exhibited. The 'Globe' appears to have been a wooden building, of a considerable size, hexagonal without and circular within; it was thatched in part, but a large portion of the roof was open to the weather. This was the company's Summer theatre, and the plays were acted by daylight. At the 'Blackfriars,' on the contrary, which was the Winter theatre, the top was entirely closed, and the performances were exhibited by candlelight. In every other respect the economy and usages of the houses appear to have been the same, and to have resembled those of every other contemporary theatre.

"With respect to the interior arrangements there were very few points of difference between our modern theatres and those of the days of Shakespeare. The terms of admission indeed were considerably cheaper; to the boxes the entrance was a shilling; to the pit and galleries only sixpence; sixpence also was the price paid for stools upon the

stage; and these seats, as we learn from Dekker's 'Gull's Hornbook,' were peculiarly affected by the wits and critics of the time. The conduct of the audience was less restrained by the sense of public decorum, and smoking tobacco, playing at cards, eating and drinking, were generally prevalent among them. The hour of performance also was earlier; the play beginning at first at one, and afterwards at three o'clock in the afternoon. During the time of representation a flag was unfurled at the top of the theatre, and the floor of the stage (as was the case with every floor at the time from the cottage to the palace) was strewn with rushes. But in other respects, the ancient theatres seem to have been very nearly similar to those of modern times; they had their pit, where the inferior class of spectators, the 'groundlings,' vented their clamorous censure or approbation; they had their boxes, to which the right of exclusive admission was hired by the night for the more wealthy and refined portion of the audience; and there were again the galleries or scaffolds above the boxes, for those who were content to purchase inferior accommodation at a cheaper rate. "On the stage, the arrangements appear to have been nearly the same as at present; the curtain divided the audience from the actors, which at the third sounding—not indeed of the bell, but of the trumpet—was withdrawn

for the commencement of the performance. With regard to the use of scenery, it is scarcely possible, from the very circumstances of the case, that such a contrivance should have escaped our ancestors. All the materials were ready to their hands; they had not to invent for themselves, but to adapt an old invention to their purposes, and at a time when every better apartment was adorned with tapestry; when even the rooms of the commonest taverns were hung with painted cloths; while all the essentials of scenery were continually before their eyes, we can hardly believe our forefathers to have been so deficient in ingenuity as never to have conceived the design of converting the common ornaments of their walls into the decorations of their theatres. Mr. Gifford, who adheres to Malone's opinion, says, 'A table, with a pen and ink thrust in, signified that the stage was a counting-house; if these were withdrawn and two stools put in their places, it was then a tavern;' and this might be satisfactory as long as the business of the play was supposed to be passing within doors; but when it was removed to the open air, such meagre devices would no longer be sufficient to guide the imagination of the audience, and some new method must have been adopted to indicate the place of action. After giving the subject considerable attention, I cannot help thinking that Steevens

was right in rejecting the evidence of Malone, and concluding that the spectators were, as at the present day, assisted in following the progress of the story by means of painted and moveable scenery."*

It must be remembered that, in the days in which Mr. Harness wrote, the legitimate drama had not yet been superseded by extravagant and ephemeral representations. A charge of pedantry might have been brought against the stage with more justice than one of frivolity. The theatres, of which there were but two, were not places for idleness and dissipation, but for study and intellectual enjoyment. There were then no stalls; nor did the pit offer that cheap rate of accommodation which has tempted managers to introduce performances of a broad and tawdry character. Moreover, the lovers of Shakespeare could then have their taste gratified to an extent which has since been impossible. The works of the great dramatist were rightly represented by the combined talent of the Kemble family. Under them, the stage became a source of high moral, as well as artistic, instruction. Never, since the days of classic Attica had the drama

* This opinion is confirmed by the ancient stage directions. In the folio Shakespeare, of 1623, we read 'Enter Brutus, *in his orchard*;' 'Enter Timon, *in the woods*;' 'Enter Timon, *from his cave*.'

struck so deeply the finer chords of the human heart; and the well-read volume was as frequent in the pit as was the white handkerchief in the gilded tiers. So jealous at this time were the audience of the fame of the great dramatist, that I have been told that the omission of a single line, or even of a word, would call forth an immediate expression of disapproval. The proud sovereign of this assemblage of high-born women and scholarly men was no less a person than Mrs. Siddons, who seems to have enjoyed a celebrity verging upon adoration. At her appearance enthusiastic applause rang through the crowded house. None who had not seen her could ever realize the impression she made. As she walked the stage like one of Nature's queens, all could understand the dignity of motion implied in Virgil's expression:

"Incessu patuit dea."

Campbell speaks of "her lofty beauty, her graceful walk and gesture." And when we add to this the charm of her flexible and expressive voice, we cannot be suprised at the admiration she awakened. Few who saw her ever forgot her. Crabbe Robinson used to say that he prided himself on three things; he had been intimate with Göthe, he had made a walking tour with Wordsworth, and *he had seen Mrs. Siddons.* Mr. Harness could not

be less deeply impressed by one who so eloquently interpreted his favourite oracle; and as might have been expected, he regarded her performance from a critical point of view. "Her high judgment watched over her qualifications." "It was not merely her appearance that gave her such power," observed Mr. Harness, "she owed much to her persevering industry. She admitted to me one day, in reply to a question, that, although it might sound egotistical for her to say it, she did not think that there would be again such an impersonation of Calista* as her own, taking into consideration the voice, the use of the stage, and above all the laborious study." On a later occasion, when he was referring to the excellence of her intonation, she observed that over-exertion in large theatres had injured her power of expression, which was much greater in her earlier days. The perfection at which she had arrived in her art, and the skill with which she equalled Nature, may be estimated from a reply made to Mr. Harness by a well-known critic, when he observed that Mrs. Siddons had played her part with spirit on the previous night. "Yes," returned his friend, "but I never before saw her so much like an actress."

Mr. Harness related the following anecdote in which the conduct of the great actress was very

* A part in "The Fair Penitent" for which she was celebrated.

characteristic. He was dining at Lord Lonsdale's, and among the company were Mrs. Siddons and Mr. and Miss Edgeworth. Mr. Edgeworth, who was sitting next to Mrs. Siddons, Sam Rogers being on the other side of her, observed after dinner, "Madam, I think I saw you perform Millamont thirty-five years ago." "Pardon me, sir." "Oh! then it was forty years ago; I distinctly recollect it." "You will excuse me, sir, I never played Millamont." "Oh, yes, ma'am, I recollect." "I think," she replied, turning to Mr. Rogers, "it is time for me to change my place," and she rose with her own peculiar dignity.*

The enthusiasm for the stage which prevailed at that day can scarcely be understood at present. As there were no numbered seats in the pit, those who entered first took the best places. The performance commenced at six o'clock, and as early as two in the afternoon the play-goers began to collect outside the theatre. Two old gentlemen in Mr. Harness's recollection were especially conspicuous from always posting themselves early against the doors. As they had to wait several hours, and found the time hang heavily, they adopted the good idea of bringing a portable chess-

* This incident is said, by Crabbe Robinson, to have occurred at Mr. Sotheby's; but there was some confusion in his mind on the subject. It was related to him by Mr. Harness.

board with them. Thus they whiled away the time in alternate checkmates until the clock struck the magic hour, when they put up their board, folded their arms, and made ready for the rush to secure the front seats.

Mr. Harness objected much to the over-inquisitive spirit which some critics have evinced in the study of Shakespeare. In a review in the *Quarterly* of "Hunter on the 'Tempest,'" in which he blames the writer for his persistent endeavours to define the localities mentioned in that play; he writes as follows :—

"The island was called into existence by a far more potent magician than even Prospero; and 'like the baseless fabric of a vision' melted 'into thin air,' leaving 'no rack behind,' with a deep and solemn sound of funeral music, on the 23rd April, 1616, the day when that mighty master died. After the departure of Prospero and Miranda, it was never visited again by any human creature. The unearthly inhabitants possessed it altogether till the hour of its dissolution. They were then variously dispersed. Caliban, clinging to one of the largest logs which Ferdinand had so industriously piled up, but which had never been 'burnt,' was floated on it in safety to the coast of Algiers. Ariel, with all his subtle company, the 'elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves,' clapping

their tiny hands, and singing 'Where the bee sucks' in sweetest melody and fullest chorus, flitter away delighted to meet the spirit of the great magician from whose fancy they had derived their life and being, and to pour forth their gratulations around him as he ascended on his upward way to regions more bright and pure and ethereal than any to which they even 'in their pride of flight' could venture to aspire. Since that happy hour they have all dwelt in harmony together in one of the fairest and most secluded valleys of 'Araby the Blest.' We know the spot; but for worlds we would not be wicked enough to deliver them over in their merry ignorance to the tender mercies of the commentators. Were we to let fall the slightest hint of the position of their melodious home, we are well aware that Mr. Hunter or Mr. Rodd, or both those gentlemen together, would start off to Rotherhithe to-morrow morning, would hire a steamer and go paddling away in a cloud of thick black smoke in pursuit of them; and having reached the spot, they would, without the least sense of compunction, gather the sweetest blossoms that Ariel ever sucked his honey from and crush them between the leaves of their *hortus siccus;* they would hunt down the innocent spirits themselves; they would scare them with unearthly sounds; they would catch them with bird-limed twigs and butterfly nets, run pins through

their delicate bodies, fix them to the bottoms of glazed boxes, and bear them away in triumph to be deposited as curiosities among the natural history shelves of the British Museum."

Macready lost, as he said, £2,000 a year owing to an article written by Mr. Harness in the *Quarterly*. So much weight had his critiques with the public of the day.

The following letters are interesting as giving an account of the Kembles' visit to America :—

To the Rev. William Harness.

"Boston, Sunday, May 5th, 1833.

"Do not imagine that I have any intention of letting you forget me, my dear Mr. Harness, or that I mean to delegate to newspapers, and such like unsatisfactory channels of information, the task of keeping my recollection alive with you. I certainly have suffered a tolerably long interval to escape since the writing of my first epistle; but that it did not follow from thence that I never meant to write to you again, *this* is proof. If I were to ask you all the questions I should like answered with regard to things in general, and particularly in my poor dear little country, I might fill my letter with one huge note of interrogation, and leave you to answer all that is 'being, doing and suffering' in England; but I rather think some

account of ourselves might be more satisfactory to you; and so, according to your noble and poetical friend, 'Here goes!' (By-the-by, his Life by Moore is a terrible pity; why couldn't his works be left to speak for him? They are his best record after all.)

"We are all in excellent health, except that my father is lame and cross, D—— sleepy and cross, and I purely cross, and nothing else. With regard to my father's lameness, he caught it—or, rather, it caught him—by the calf of the leg, in the act of springing off the stage after me, in Benedick. 'Tis an accident of no great importance—a sprain or fracture of one or two of the smaller fibres in the leg, which makes him go a little haltingly just now, but is not likely to inconvenience him long. As for all the other ailments, that is the crossness, 'tis owing to a bitter bleak east wind, which is the only air that blows in Boston, and keeps us all in a state of misanthropy and universal dissatisfaction. Perhaps, under these circumstances, I had better have deferred writing to you; but, had I waited till the wind changed its quarter, I must have waited till we returned to New York; for Boston is the abiding place of the east wind.

"Our houses, wherever we go, are very fine; our business most successful. The people and places vie with each other in kindness and civility to us; and as for me, I am so praised, so admired, so

courted, and so flattered, that I am thrown into the depths of humility, sometimes, when I come to consider my own unworthiness; and only fear that at last I shall acquire such an idea of my own excellence, importance, and admirableness that I shall come to the conviction that 'the world is mine oyster.' Seriously, I am sometimes perplexed at the universal kindness and almost affection that is expressed towards me, when I cannot help feeling that indeed I have done nothing really to deserve it. However, thank God for it! And as for the desert, why perhaps it is with me as with the man who said he did not know whether he could play on the fiddle or not, for he'd never tried.

"Boston is a Yankee town, which I daresay is as much as you know about it; but, Sir, 'tis moreover the wealthiest town in the Union; 'tis, Sir, the most *belles-letterish* and blue town in the Union; 'tis, Sir, the most aristocratic town in the Union, and decidedly bears the greatest resemblance to an English town of any I have seen. The country round it, too, is more like a bit of the old land than anything I have yet seen; and, though some of the wild romantic scenery round Philadelphia enchanted me very much, the white clean cottages, the blossoming apple-trees and flowering garden-plots of the villages round this place have recalled England more vividly, and given me more pleasure

than anything I have yet seen. The society is a little stiff; they have, unfortunately, a reputation in this good town for superior intellect, and are proportionately starched and stupid. However, to have known Webster, and even Audubon, is in itself something; and though Channing has been obliged by ill-health to leave Boston for the South, I trust yet to have the privilege of knowing him—who, I think, reflects more honour on his native city than all its other superiorities put together.

"We act every night here but Saturday. I grumble dreadfully at this hard work—not because it tires me, but because I am idle and like two holidays in a week. However, when I consider that every night lost is a large sum of money lost (tor our profits are very great) I am willing to give up my laziness, so long as the work is not too much either for my father or myself. I take an amazing quantity of exercise on horseback; 'tis meat and drink and sleep to me, and affords me, moreover, the best opportunity of seeing the country, which one never does well in a carriage; and 'tis quite entertaining to see how, before I have been a fortnight in a place, all the women are getting into riding-skirts and up upon horses. I have received ever so many thanks for the improved health of the ladies here who, since my arrival, are all horseback-

mad; and I truly think a good shaking does a woman good in every way.

"I have acted several new parts since I have been in this new world; Katherine, the Shrew, which I do pretty well, Bizarre, which I also do pretty well, but particularly the dancing—Violante in 'The Wonder,' which I do worse than anything that can be seen, and Mary Copp in 'Charles the Second,' which I do very fairly well, leaving out the singing. Bianca seems to be my favourite part with the public, in tragedy, and Julia in the 'Hunchback,' in comedy. I hear Knowles has written another play with a magnificent woman's part. Of course we shall have it out here before long; I am curious to see it.

"I have seen Washington Irving several times since I have been in this country. He is idolized here, and talks of settling himself in some little sunny nook on the Hudson—that broadest, brightest river in the world. He is very delightful, a most happy, cheerful, benevolent, simple person. His absence of seventeen years from this country has produced changes in it which seem to fill him with amazement and admiration. And, indeed, 'tis a most marvellous country! It stands unparalleled under every aspect in which it can be considered, and presents one of the most interesting and extraordinary subjects of contemplation that the eye of

a politician, or the more extensive gaze of a philosopher, can scan. A land peopled, as this has been, by the overflowings of all other lands; to the south colonized by the adventurous but thrifty younger branches of noble families of England, and in great measure also by men whose vices and crimes, as well as their utter poverty, drove them to find shelter away from the society whose laws they had outraged; to the north, again, this new world owing its first civilized inhabitants to the purest and loftiest spirit of Freedom—the holiest and most steadfast spirit of Religion (emanating from England, too); and all having received their first dawn of civilization from bodies of men differing from each other in object, in religious faith, in country and lineage: a whole continent thus strangely reclaimed from utter savageness, and in the process of a century and a half becoming, from a desolate and utter wilderness, a great political existence, taking a firm and honourable station among the powers of the world. A land abounding in cultivation, civilization, populous towns, full of wealth, of business, of trade, of importance; vast ports receiving the flags of every nation under Heaven; to see huge ocean steamboats carrying hundreds of people to and fro every hour along the Hudson, the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi, whose waters, a hundred years ago, were never visited but by the Indian

canoe; to see forests felled, and towns arising, railways and canals traversing and connecting what were wild tracts of interminable wood and waste; to see life, and all its wonderful arts and sciences, reclaiming these vast solitudes to the uses of man and the purposes of civilized existence: this mighty operation which is at this instant going on under our very eyes makes this country one of great interest, of admiration, of anxious observation to all the world. 'Tis a marvellous country indeed!

"Bless my soul, I didn't mean to be cross* to you, because that's an infliction! Don't you wish that you and I wrote better hands? Pray, dear Mr. Harness, if you have time to spare, write to me again; it pleases me to hear from England, and it pleases me to hear from you.

"For I am very truly, and with great regard,

"Yours,

"FANNY KEMBLE."

To the Rev. W. Harness.

"New York, 24th April, 1834.

"My dear friend,

"When I left England I promised I would write to you, and I am ashamed that I have so long neglected to redeem my promise; but I rely upon your good-nature to excuse me, although I confess

* The last page of the letter is crossed.

I hardly deserve forgiveness. Fanny, I know, has already told you all that we have seen and done; so that you have not been left in ignorance of our proceedings by my sin of omission. Pray, which are considered more deadly by Divines, sins of omission, or sins of commission? You will not have time to answer me on this point before we meet; therefore, I must seek for information from my friends of the cloth in this hemisphere—Dr. Wainwright or Dr. Channing: both learned men and pious Christians. Wainwright, with whom I am better acquainted than I am with Channing, seems to me more of a man of the world; he mixes with general society, and is a well-bred, liberal clergyman, an Episcopalian, and likely to become the next Bishop of Boston. Channing, you know, is a Unitarian, a mild, engaging person in discourse, an eloquent and impressive preacher in the pulpit. Wainwright is a good preacher, too; he has much more physical power than Channing, but in my opinion is far his inferior in point of intellect.

"So much for the leaders in *your* profession. For those in mine, you are almost as well acquainted with their merits as I am. Mr. Booth, as well as Mr. Hamblin, you must have seen in England; and Mr. Forrest you will probably see, for report says he is to visit London. He is in person of Herculean proportions, fitter, in appear-

ance, for a drayman or a porter than an actor. I have seen him but in two parts, Pierre, which he acted indifferently well; the other, Oroloosa, an Indian; in the representation of which characters he has acquired his reputation. There was an American of the name of Scott, whom I preferred, in the same tragedy; but he is thought by his countrymen very inferior to Forrest. There are two favourite actresses, too, not very distinguished for talent. Miss Vincent and Miss Clifton: the latter is a very tall but beautiful girl.

"We hope to find you and your dear sister at home when we reach London. We did intend to sail from New York on the 16th of June, but for the advantages of a superior ship and a more agreeable captain, we have been induced to postpone our departure until the 24th of June: so pray look out for the arrival of the 'United States,' commanded by Captain Holdritch. How happy Fanny's friends will be to see her once more before she is married, won't they? The legitimate drama will have another chance, I hope, of resuscitation; and we shall both at least take leave of the British stage in a manner worthy of the house of Kemble!

"God bless you! give my affectionate regard to your dear sister; and believe me, my very dear friend, unalterably yours,

"C. KEMBLE.

"Fanny has told you of the irreparable loss we have sustained by the death of her aunt. May all our deaths be as peaceful and as happy!"

Mr. Harness took little interest in the drama of the present day. Low comedy and scenic effects were his aversion; and he was wont to say that acting was now a debased art. He still knew a few of the elder members of the histrionic profession, and especially Charles Kean, for whom he had a great personal regard. He remarked how much he had done to raise the social character of the stage, and was deeply affected when he was sent for to attend his friend in his last hours. He had an equal esteem for Mrs. Kean. Referring to her kindness and good-nature, he said that she took great interest in the little children who came to act in the pantomimes, and that she used to teach them their Catechism between the pieces, thus endeavouring to compensate for their loss of regular instruction. Mr. Harness's schools, like many others in London, suffered much from the withdrawal of little pupils in the Winter. On first entering his schools at Knightsbridge, after the Christmas holidays, he inquired why the attendance was so small? "Because, Sir," replied the teacher, "so many of the children are gone to be angels!"

CHAPTER IV.

CHARADES BY MR. HARNESS AND MISS MITFORD.—MAGAZINE ARTICLES.—EDITION OF MASSINGER COMMENCED.—DRAMATIC POEMS.—MEMORIALS OF CATHERINE FANSHAWE.

DURING Mr. Harness's residence at Hampstead, in what may be termed the holiday period of his life, he occasionally indulged his fancy in the composition of short poems, such as were then in fashion and were considered to add grace and sentiment to the routine of correspondence. In his intercourse with his friends he also found another way of contributing to the entertainment and sociability of those around him. Many of his young lady acquaintances were proficient in acting charades, and found much pleasure in such exercises of ingenuity. As he was known to be a man of taste, he was soon called upon to use his skill for their benefit, and he accordingly planned a somewhat more elaborate performance than they had hitherto tried, by the introduction of a little dramatic scene and dialogue to represent each word. The attempt was successful,

and Mr. Harness's charades met with considerable approbation.

Miss Mitford was one of those who were most pleased with his idea, and as she was then writing for the magazines, requested permission to publish some of his charades in *Blackwood.* This was granted; for, although Mr. Harness wished to keep them for the use of his own friends, he was unwilling to lose any opportunity of affording pecuniary assistance to his early companion. They accordingly appeared in the year 1826; Miss Mitford adopting Mr. Harness's plans, and developing them with her own facility of expression. "I enclose my charades," she writes to him, "which, in all but their faults, might more properly be called *yours.*" In a letter written at this time, Mr. Harness thus alludes to them, and gives some interesting details about his interview with Deville the phrenologist:—

"My dear Miss Mitford,

"Send me the charades, and I will forward them to *Blackwood.* I have not a doubt of their doing your opera at Covent Garden, if Charles find it likely to succeed—which, from the nature of the story, must, I should think, be the case. I really think Deville was right about my head; and right, in fact, even when he appeared to be wrong in his description. For instance, he said that I should be offended by

glaring colours, which is not the case. I have the *eyes of colours*, but am extremely annoyed by colours that don't harmonize, though I am rather fond of strong colours. I forget whether, in my hurry of writing to you, I told you of his extraordinary exposition of the character of my friend Newman's little boy. The child went with me; and Deville having told me the propensities of the child's character, said, 'There is one thing very remarkable in this boy's head; I never saw any English child with the perceptive organs so strongly marked. In general, the English have strong reflection, and the Foreigners strong perception; but in this boy there is an exact and beautiful equality subsisting between the two. His mother is, as you know, a Portuguese. This was an admirable hit.

By-the-by, would it not be better to reserve your charades for your novel? They would take as *new*, and, at the present time, novelty of incident is the very thing that novels want.

"With kindest remembrances to Dr. and Mrs. Mitford.

Best love,
Yours ever most faithfully,
WILLIAM HARNESS."

One of these charades formed a complete little drama of the time of the Commonwealth. The word

was "Match-lock," and the personæ a Puritan's daughter, a Cavalier, and the irritable old Puritan himself. The last of the series published was composed entirely by Miss Mitford. It was on "Blackwood," and gave an exquisite specimen of the authoress's poetic talent, and of her power in describing sylvan scenery.

In the following year (1827) Mr. Harness published in *Blackwood's Magazine* a little story, possessing interest as advocating that cheerful view of life which was so congenial to his temperament. The hero of the tale commences in the following joyous mood:—

"I was alone; my heart beat lightly; my pulse was quickened by the exercise of the morning; my blood flowed freely through my veins as meeting with no checks or impediments to its current, and my spirits were elated by a multitude of happy remembrances and of brilliant hopes." Everything seemed to him delightful; even the fire at which he sat. "'What capital coals these are' (he breaks forth), 'there is nothing in the world so cheering—so enlivening—as a good hot, blazing sea-coal fire.' I broke a large lump into fragments with the poker as I spoke. 'It's all mighty fine,' I continued, 'for us travellers to harangue the ignorant on the beauty of foreign cities, of their buildings without dust, and their skies without a cloud; but

for my own part, I like to see a dark, thick, heavy atmosphere hanging over a town. It forewarns the traveller of his approach to the habitations, the business, and the comforts of his civilized fellow-creatures. It gives an air of grandeur and importance and mystery to the scene. It conciliates our respect: we know that there must be some fire where there is so much smoke.' I confirmed my argument in favour of our metropolitan obscurity by another stroke of the poker against the largest fragment of the broken coal; and then, letting fall my weapon and turning my back to the fire, I exclaimed, 'Certainly—there's no kind of furniture like books; nothing else can afford one an equal air of comfort and habituality. Such a resource too! A man never feels alone in a library. He lives surrounded by companions who stand ever obedient to his call, coinciding with every caprice of temper, and harmonizing with every turn and disposition of the mind. Yes! I love my books; they are my friends—my counsellors—my companions! Yes! I have a real personal attachment, a very tender regard for my books!'"

Those who knew Mr. Harness's cheerful temperament, and remember how well the walls of his rooms were lined with the works of great men, may easily imagine that he was here speaking his own sentiments. The story, which is named "Reverses,"

proceeds to narrate that the joyous bachelor has just sold his estates for £80,000, and is about to be married to the most lovely and accomplished of woman-kind. After a delicious dream about white favours and bridal festivities, he is awakened next morning by his valet, who is the bearer of the overwhelming intelligence that his solicitor, into whose hands the £80,000 had just been paid, had absconded during the night. Our jubilant hero is in a moment prostrated. He betakes himself to his solicitor's partner, but finds him only full of his own misfortunes. He calls upon his old schoolfellow, Fraser, but finds he has left town, and the servant intimates that his friend went off in haste on hearing of the disaster. Luttrell—such was our hero's name—returns to his lodgings in the lowest despondency. Everything seemed lost; but still, as he pondered over his misfortunes, one bright image presented itself to him. "My fortune is gone," he exclaimed; "my friend has deserted me; but Maria! thou, dearest, still remainest true to me! I'll tranquillize my mind with the sweet counsel of your daily letter, and then proceed to deliberate and act for myself." To his dismay, no letter arrived! Maria, then, had deserted him in his distress, and had been unable to bear so severe a test! His misery was now at its height; but as he strode about his room he caught the eye of his Newfound-

land dog fixed wistfully and tenderly upon him. "Yes, Neptune," he cried, "everything on earth has forsaken me, except you—you, alone, my good and faithful dog are constant to me in my hours of affliction."

He now began to take a misanthropic view of life, and in his fever of excitement thanked Heaven for the calamity which had befallen him, as it had shown him the true character of those he had unwisely trusted. He meditated suicide, and actually left his home with a pistol in his pocket. Having been accustomed to row on the river he went down to his boat, as he thought he should thus escape from observing eyes. His dog alone accompanied him, and he pulled rapidly past Chelsea. Ceasing to row, and beginning again to declaim against the depravity of the world, he at length so much irritated his canine friend, who was lying in the bottom of the boat, that the dog growled. "Right! right!" he exclaimed. "My very dog turns against me!" In his desperation he seized the animal and attempted to fling him into the water: he lost his balance in the attempt, and being unable to swim would have been inevitably drowned but for the assistance of his belied companion. Thus preserved from a watery grave, and somewhat sobered by the cold immersion, he began, when seated on the bank, to take a more moderate view of the world in

general. The noble act of his dog, whom he intended to shoot, caused him to feel humbled and self-condemned. He made his way home in a different mood from that in which he had started, and on his arrival found a note from his Maria, explaining why she had not written on the previous day, and saying that, although their income would be greatly diminished, there would, she was sure, be no diminution of their united happiness. Soon afterwards, a knock came at the door. It was no other than Fraser, whose sudden disappearance was owing to his having started in pursuit of his friend's absconding attorney. He had overtaken him, horsewhipped him, and recovered the money. The tale ends in the same genial tone with which it commenced, and Luttrell exclaims enthusiastically. "The world's a good world—the women are all true, the friends are all faithful, and the dogs are all attached and staunch; and if any individual is induced at any moment to hold an opposite opinion, depend upon it that unhappy man is deluded by false appearances, and that a little inquiry would convince him of his mistake."

Speaking of this story, Miss Mitford remarks, "How capital 'Reverses' was! I don't know when I have been so delighted with anything. The tone of fashion, and the little air of laughing at fashion even whilst adopting it, were admirable,

and you and your books are done to the life; only you should not have thought of shooting the Newfoundland. But the conclusion makes amends for all, and is so like your own real manner that I should have known it for yours anywhere."

Mr. Harness entirely sympathised with Miss Mitford in her warm feelings towards her friends, and indeed towards mankind in general, but did not follow her in her devotion to animals. He was wont to say that we should not bestow upon the lower creation what was rightly due to the higher; and for this reason he objected to Byron's epitaph on his dog, saying that it was an unfair aspersion on mankind, and that we received from our friends fully as much regard as our own conduct towards them deserved.

The success which attended Mr. Harness's edition of Shakespeare, and the knowledge he possessed of the beauties of our earlier literature, induced Mr. Murray to propose that he should publish a family edition of the works of the elder dramatists. The merits of these writings had been long obscured, if not ignored, owing to the coarse expressions which occasionally disfigure their pages, and which were due to the rude vocabulary of that unrefined age. The fault was not, as Mr. Harness observes, properly attributable to the writers themselves, who merely adopted the ordinary phraseology: "The

old English dramatists, the friends and contemporaries of Shakespeare, have contributed one of the most valuable portions to the poetic literature of our country. But, abounding as they do in wit and fancy, in force and copiousness of expression, in truth and variety of character, in rapid change of incident, in striking and interesting situations, and above all in justice and elevation of sentiment, their works are totally unknown to the generality of readers, and are only found in the hands of the adventurous few who have deviated from the beaten paths of study to explore for themselves less familiar and exhausted tracts of literary amusement. The neglect of these authors, in an age so favourable to works of imagination as the present, can only be ascribed to that occasional coarseness of language which intermixes with and pollutes the breath of their most exquisite scenes. For what may be termed the licentiousness of the stage, for immorality of principle, for that offence which was transplanted from France to England with the Court of Charles the Second, our old dramatists do not require the aid of any apologist. They are innocent of attempting to confound the notion of right and wrong, or of seeking to influence the bad passions of our nature against the first great principles of morals. These were the corruptions of a later and more vicious age."

Mr. Harness never completed the work which he commenced. The duties of his large London parish now fully occupied his time; and although the remuneration was some object to him, he finally relinquished the undertaking, after the publication of the four first volumes of "Massinger's Plays."

To the love of more serious study Mr. Harness united an artist's appreciation of the beauty of form and colour. When he closed his heavy tomes of learned theology and left their subdued light, he opened the more sunny pages of the Book of Nature and walked abroad by streams and mountain sides, with a heart full of fresh and joyous impulses. No one enjoyed his short holiday ramble more thoroughly than he; and whether he strolled along the banks of the legendary Loire, or through the intricate windings of some antique Dutch town, or, nearer home, explored the mountain regions of Wales or Cumberland, he always brought back some interesting sketches as remembrances of his summer excursion.

On one occasion, during his earlier London duty, he returned with an unusually rich collection from Holland, and in 1837 he composed a dramatic poem, the scenes of which were laid in Antwerp. The story was one of love; a silken and slightly-woven tissue, little valued or elaborated by its

author. It contained, nevertheless, some fine sentiments and graceful descriptions; as where, for instance, the happy old age of Kessel, a rich burgher of Antwerp is thus pictured:

STEINHAULT. Whose eye more bright, whose spirit is more gay,
Whose step more firm, whose heart more warm, than Kessel's?
With you a green and vigorous old age
Throws off the burden of its many years,
Disdaining Time's slight malice. Eighty winters,
As shadows on some noble monument,
Have fall'n and passed and done you no disservice!
KESSEL. Mark me, my friend, my course of life has been
Most highly favoured, a serene repose,
Free from disturbing passions; a sweet calm
Of kindness and prosperity and honour;
A holiday voyage along a sunny stream;
A summer's day, of which the moonlight eve
Wears the noon's brightness, though the sun has set.
In this tranquillity the lamp of being
Burns with a steady and unvarying flame,
And none observes how wastes the oil within.
I—I alone—perceive the weakening force
Of life's high energies—I only feel
The sense of my decline. Let all things rest
Prosperous and bright around me as they are,
And some years longer may old Kessel live
To welcome at his board the friends he loves:
But peace is now essential to existence;
I have no strength for conflict. Should affliction
Lay its hard hand upon me, I well know
The spirit's gone which might have struggled with it,
And sorrow's touch would be the stroke of death.

Some of the lines, interpreted by late events, seem almost prophetic :*

"Show me the city, howe'er rich and feared,
Secure in men and arms, fenced up to heaven,
And in her massive walls impregnable,
Which holy wedlock holds in slight respect;
And I, a sure interpreter of fate,
Judging the future by the past, will tell
Where the foe lurks in subtle ambushment,
That shall her deep foundations undermine,
O'erclimb her lofty bulwarks, drain her wealth,
Quench in enervating licentiousness
The valour of her sons, to bondage lead them,
And on the barren plain or sounding shore
Leave her the ruined haunt of savage creatures!"

Further on the same subject is again touched upon :

"Of a fair tree the elder poets speak
Which—while it stands entire—bears lovely blossoms,
And fruit according; but, if haply thence
A branch, a bud, a leaf be broken off,
The whole plant withering dies: and even such—
So beautiful of growth, so frail of being—
Is marriage happiness. Its mutual trust
In the faith of each to each, firm and entire,
It is the sovereign gift of all the bounties
Heaven hath awarded man. But once impair,

* Speaking of France, Mr. Harness said that he did not enjoy Paris, as it seemed to be the city of the idle. "The French," he added, referring to their civil commotions—"don't know what they want, and will never be satisfied till they get it."

E'en in the least degree, that confidence
Which is its vital principle, and straight
Earth's fairest flower perishes away,
Never to bloom again."

Mr. Harness read this poem to Lady Dacre, an intimate friend, and one of the literary authorities of the day. He probably preferred submitting it to a lady, as she would be a better judge in social matters. Lady Dacre desired to have the MS. for her private perusal, and having succeeded in deciphering the author's enigmatical handwriting, sent him the following critique on the work.

"The Hoo, Nov. 8, 1832.

"Dear Mr. Harness,

"If I had not known you had another copy of 'The Wife of Antwerp,' I should have been in a great fidget about keeping this so long. I always meant to send it to London by Mrs. Ellice, and her departure is fixed for next Tuesday. At her house then (57, Park Street, Grosvenor Square) you will find it; and she bids me say she will be delighted to see you, and that you *must* call for it, and that she will not *send* it to you. I studied the play and made myself mistress of the handwriting, and read it off like print to our party, who were all exceedingly pleased and interested by it. Have you made any alterations since you read it here? It is much

"

too good to be laid aside in disgust, as you seem half inclined to do. And yet I think you might improve it, in what I consider the mere drudgery of the business. You have poetry, passion, situation, and strong interest; only look to the *dove-tailing*, the accounting for things as they take place. You are quite right in avoiding divided affections in a woman who is to interest (her own sex at least), but any degree of timidity or female softness may be admissible in a very young girl. * * *

"These are merely loose suggestions for your better judgment. If they set you thinking your own thoughts (for they must be your own for you to express them effectively), I have done all I wished. We have so many heroines with grand characters and high sentiments, why not give interest to what is most weakly feminine? * * * Now, think away, and if anything should occur that may improve the mere management of the incidents of the play, don't be idle. If you should be so kind as to write to say you have received the MS., and forgive all my nonsense, pray say a word of Mr. Kemble and others in the New World.

"Yours truly,

"B. DACRE.

"Pray excuse this incoherent scrawl; I am in company, and talking to several others as well as to

you; and never could bring myself to write a letter over again in my life."

Mr. Harness had not sufficient confidence or ambition to be induced to publish upon such uncertain commendation. He determined to commit the poem to the flames, but, in the act of destruction, his hand was fortunately arrested by his old friend, Mr. Dyce. This discriminating gentleman, familiarly versed in the beauties of the elder poets, saw much to admire in this composition, and at his request Mr. Harness had it printed for private circulation, and, as in duty bound, dedicated it to its preserver. Its title was changed to that of "Welcome and Farewell;" and it was reviewed in the "Quarterly," where long extracts from it were given. The article terminated with the words:—

"Thus closes this very pleasing specimen—not indeed of the highest kind of drama—it is not tragedy, which 'in her gorgeous pall comes sweeping by'—but of a simple and affecting household story thrown with great skill into a dramatic form. And we cannot conclude without remarking that which ought hardly to be, but unhappily, in the present state of our imaginative literature, is a distinctive excellence, the pure and healthful moral tone which prevails throughout the poem. There

is nothing of the cold and elaborate propriety of a writer wishing to create a favourable impression of his own character, and seizing every opportunity of inculcating trite and obvious truth; but the genuine and spontaneous impulse of a good and pure heart, speaking in every sentiment, and tempering every expression."

Miss Mitford in the following letter speaks of her friend's production with her characteristic enthusiasm :—

"Three Mile Cross, November 4th, 1839.

"My dear Friend,

"Let me thank you most sincerely and heartily for the thrice beautiful play. I have read it with equal pride and pleasure—a triumphant pleasure in such an evidence of the sweet and gentle power of my oldest and, I might almost say, my kindest friend. It breathes the spirit of the old dramatists from first to last, especially of Heywood, whose 'Woman killed with Kindness' is forcibly recalled; but by that sort of resemblance which springs from a congeniality of talent, and makes one say, 'Heywood might have written this, although there is much more of the letter of poetry, more finished and beautiful passages, than can be found in any single play of the 'Prose Shakespeare.' I do not know when I have read a drama which bore such evi-

dence of the author's mind, so good, so pure, so indulgent, so gentlemanly. Lady Dacre told me that it was full of beauty; but I did not expect so much poetry, and I feel sincerely grateful to Mr. Dyce (whom I always liked very heartily on his own account) for rescuing this charming play from the flames. When I said that I had not for a long time seen a drama so full of the author, I fibbed unconsciously, for it is into plays that authors do put their very selves. The character of Kessel is very beautiful and original, and the high-minded Albert, and poor, poor Margaret, have made me cry more than I can tell. At all events, I rejoice to have it printed. It fixes you in the same high position poetically that you have always occupied socially and professionally. It is a thing for your friends to be proud of, in every sense of the word. If the tableaux go on, I shall come to you for a dramatic scene. Has that book been sent yet? You will be very much pleased with Miss Barrett's ballad, in spite of a little want of clearness, and with Mr. Proctor's spirited poem. In short, it is the only book bearing my name of which I was ever proud; but if we go on, I shall be still prouder next year to have you added to my list of poets and friends. What a thing it is, by mere self-postponement and sympathy in the claims of others, to have hidden such a gift! It is just like what your

sister does, who—cleverer and better than half her acquaintances—always speaks of herself as nobody.

"God bless you! A thousand thanks for all your kindness.

"Ever most faithfully yours,

"M. R. MITFORD."

On a later occasion, during an excursion in Wales in 1843, Mr. Harness composed a play, which on his return he printed and dedicated to Lord Lansdowne. This poem, although in a dramatic form, more resembles a Bucolic or Georgic, and is principally remarkable for the picturesque country sketches with which it abounds. Mr. Harness does not seem to claim for it any niche in the Temple of Thalia, when he merely refers to it as "Scenes written last Autumn during some solitary walks at the Lakes and in North Wales." The dialogue commences in a harvest field when the work of the sickle is being suspended, owing to a contention between two young reapers—George and Walter. The immediate cause of the dissension is that George has been taunting Walter with his unknown parentage; but the true origin of the mischief is as usual—a woman. George has known and been devoted to his cousin Mary from childhood; and he thus touchingly records their intimacy:—

"When first my father
Purchased the farm hard by, she was an infant,
And I a boy not more than ten years old;
Yet then I loved her. When sent here,
As oft I was, on errands from my home,
'Twas my delight to see that, as I entered,
She would spring forth and spread her little arms
And laugh aloud, and try to come to me,
Even from her mother's lap. As she grew up,
And 'gan to walk alone, she'd take my hand,
And stroll for hours about the fields and lanes,
Gathering the wild rose and the eglantine,
As I bent down the branches to her reach.
In all my boyhood's light and stirring hours,
There was no spot i' th' green, nor chase a-field—
Though well I loved them—gave me half the joy
I found in idling with that soft-eyed child.
And when with feigned reluctance I forbore,
She, with her pretty wiles and promised kisses,
Would woo me still to be her playfellow.
Then afterwards, in all her school-day troubles,
To me she ran to hide her bursting tears;
In all her school-day triumphs, first to me
Would run to show the prize she had obtained;
Nor did she wish for any living thing—
Kitten, or bird, or squirrel from the wood,
To cast her girlish care and fondness on,
But Cousin George must seek it. And, till Walter
Began to train his slight and delicate limbs
To our field labours, and to haunt the farm
With his soft voice and gently flowing speech,
His rhymes of love, to suit old scraps of tunes,
His tales of distant lands and former times,
Conn'd from the Vicar's book, her kindness never
Knew shadow of abatement or caprice.

But Walter, conscious of the untoward circum-

stances of his birth, has never dared to confess his love, although Mary, who loves George only as a brother, evidently favours him. Changing the scene, we have some rapid and telling repartee between Sir Charles Tracy and Lady Ellinor his wife, because he will not allow her to frequent the gay Court of Charles the Second. Lady Ellinor exhibits all the predilections and prejudices of a lady of fashion, and her worldly wisdom is a foil for Sir Charles's unambitious contentment. Sir Charles remarks that the poor enjoy many blessings unknown to the rich, and in the following passage we observe some of Mr. Harness's own sentiments :—

LADY ELLINOR. Does your philosophy contemplate, then,
In its next transformation, to reduce
Our state to the condition you admire
And test their happiness?
SIR CHARLES. 'Twere all in vain.
The simple bliss enjoyed by simple people,
Once forfeited, can never be reclaimed.
Learning, refinement, arts, inducing wants
Foreign to nature, opening a wider scope
For objects vague, for wishes infinite,
For aspirations after viewless things,
Teach us to scorn the blessings at our feet,
And long for some vast, undefined delights,
Which, if existent, never can be reached.
Knowledge, a doubtful acquisition, shedding
Its light upon our souls, like Psyche's lamp,
Expels the good best suited to their nature,
And yields no reparation for its loss.

Walter is really their son, who is supposed to be dead. The discovery, and the meeting between him and Lady Ellinor's son is drawn with great power and delicacy. She disapproves his engagement to Mary, a yeoman's daughter, and wishes him to become the head of an abbey in France. He replies that his faith precludes him from such fulfilment.

LADY ELLINOR. Deem you, then,
The church your glorious forefathers all died in,
And millions of your fellow-Christians live,
Is, as the shallow Puritan asserts,
A second Babylon—an Antichrist?
So young, a bigot!
WALTER. I am not ignorant
She still maintains the faith, but so obscured
By the accumulated superstitions gathered
In the dark lapse of former centuries,
That truth lies hid beneath the crust of error,
Like a fair statue negligently kept,
Till overgrowing moss and envious lichens
Mar and conceal its beauty. I have never
Reproached her with hard epithets; but must
Avoid all falsehood, and adhere to Truth!

Further on, in the high sentiments expressed by Sir Charles, we trace the author's free and natural turn of mind; and in the commendation of a retired country life we are reminded of his predilections:

SIR CHARLES. Oh, Ellinor, there's a nobility—
Decked with no orders, by no titles marked—
Which far, in its essential excellence,
Transcends the paltry dignity conferred
By th' herald's blazoned scroll and doubtful lore.
LADY ELLINOR. And resides where?
SIR CHARLES. Among our neighbours round.
LADY ELLINOR. Indeed! so near at hand!
SIR CHARLES. For centuries
The families of these our villagers,
The honest son the honest sire succeeding,
In the same lowly tenements have dwelt,
And spent their lives in tilling the same fields.
LADY ELLINOR. A novel patent of nobility!
SIR CHARLES. Age after age their line has been prolonged
From times beyond the date of history.
LADY ELLINOR. A dull and spiritless herd unknown to fame,
Because they lacked the virtues that aspire!
SIR CHARLES. Rather, unknown to fame because their souls,
By vice unstained, from selfish passion free,
In humble occupations found content
And in the home-affections placed their joys!

* * *

I hold that honour honourably won,
Titles and coronets, renown and station,
Afford the purest stimulants to action,
Which men, untouched by heavenward desires,
Can raise their hopes or bend their efforts to.
But glittering orders and proud appellations
Are but as stigmas when the unworthy wear them;
And to degenerate from a father's greatness,
To soil the badge of honour with foul acts,
To shame by vice the rank by virtue won,
To have the state which speaks a gentleman,
Yet want the generous, humble, kindly spirit

Imported in the name—stamps a reproach
On the base scion of a noble stock,
Which sinks him so much lower than the people,
As were the heights above them whence he fell!

The engagement between Walter and Mary, though much against Lady Ellinor's wishes, is finally agreed to, and Sir Charles assigns the young couple a residence at "Aber by the sea," hard by

the Menai's sparkling straits,
Where, with its satellite isle, fair Anglesea
Rests on a plain of waters, which beyond
Blend with the distant sky; while to the east,
Huge Penmaenmawr, and mountains further still,
That girdle in old Conway's quiet bay,
Bask in the full light of the setting sun;
And Bangor's hallowed towers and solemn woods
Rise in deep shade toward the glowing West.

There is a healthy tone in this poem; free and wide as are the views it advocates, it never tends to unsettle the mind, but teaches a wholesome lesson of contentment and moderation.

During the holiday excursion to the Lakes of Cumberland, in which the above "scenes" were written, Mr. Harness visited Southey and Wordsworth, with whom he had become previously acquainted. Southey he described to me as a man of middle height, with keen eyes and a large nose. His library presented a strange appearance, being full of books which his daughter had bound in stamped cotton

and inscribed with their names in marking ink. "He lived too much alone," Mr. Harness observed, "but in his state of softening of the brain was unfit to marry." Wordsworth lived nearer Ambleside. Mr. Harness liked his old-fashioned residence. It had been a farm-house, added to, and in the dining-room the kitchen-range and oven remained.

One of the undertakings of Mr. Harness's later years was the preparation, for private circulation, of the Memorials of Miss Catherine Fanshawe. This lady had been one of his most intimate friends, and had even proposed to make him her heir, but he refused the offer, averring that he could not endure the thought that he should in any way benefit by her death. He was often wont to say that he could not understand the desire which some persons evinced to obtain legacies; for, as he well observed, it was impossible to receive one without incurring the loss of a friend more valuable than any money thus acquired. Miss Fanshawe accordingly only made him the bequest of her etchings and manuscripts, which he gladly accepted. From these Mr. Harness compiled a small volume of "Memorials," to rescue her memory from the oblivion which threatened it. Those who have only heard of her in connection with the riddle on the letter H, have little idea of the range of her endowments or the elegance

of her taste. Mr. Harness speaks with affectionate remembrance of "her varied accomplishments, her acute perception of the beautiful, her playful fancy, her charming conversation, her gentle and retiring manners, her lively sympathy with the sorrows and the joys of others, and, above all, her simple piety;" and he observes that she was a cherished member of that society, not very extended, but intimately united by a common love of literature, art, and science, which existed in London at the close of the last and the opening of the present centuries, and which, perhaps, "taken for all in all, has never been surpassed."

Miss Fanshawe's poems and sketches evince a considerable appreciation of humour. One of the latter, representing an evening party some eighty years since, with two politicians gesticulating before the fire-place, surrounded by a languid knot of fops and dandies, while the ladies are left to themselves, dosing and yawning behind their fans at the other end of the room, might, but for the quaintness of costume, remind us of many similar festivities at the present day. But Miss Fanshawe's great success lay in her delineation of children, of whose varying moods and expressions of countenance she seems to have possessed an admirable perception. Many charming groups of them are here photographed from her sketches.

The celebrated riddle by which Miss Fanshawe is best known arose, Mr. Harness said, from an accidental conversation at the Deep Dene. Mr. Hope was at the time entertaining with his usual liberality a number of eminent and literary friends, and in the course of the evening some remarks turned the conversation upon the letter H, and the unworthy treatment it received in the centre of metropolitan civilization. The party retired soon afterwards, but the subject of discussion had touched Miss Fanshawe's ingenious fancy, and while others slept her mind was busily employed. Next morning at breakfast she brought down the poem and read it to the delighted and astonished guests :—

"'Twas whispered* in heaven, 'twas muttered in hell,
And echo caught faintly the sound as it fell;
On the confines of earth 'twas permitted to rest,
And the depths of the ocean its presence confessed.
'Twill be found in the sphere when 'tis riven asunder,
Be seen in the lightning, and heard in the thunder.
'Twas allotted to man with his earliest breath,
Attends at his birth, and awaits him in death;
Presides o'er his happiness, honour and health;
Is the prop of his house and the end of his wealth.
In the heaps of the miser 'tis hoarded with care,
But is sure to be lost on his prodigal heir.
It begins every hope, every wish it must bound,
With the husbandman toils, with the monarch is crowned.

* Mr. Harness said that the original commenced:

"Twas in Heaven pronounced."

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Without it the soldier, the seaman may roam,
But woe to the wretch that expels it from home!
In the whispers of conscience its voice will be found,
Nor e'en in the whirlpool of passion be drowned.
'Twill not soften the heart; but, though deaf be the ear,
It will make it acutely and instantly hear.
Yet in shade let it rest, like a delicate flower;
Ah! breathe on it softly—it dies in an hour."

These lines thus first introduced were soon well-known and admired throughout the country, and from their style and curious felicity were attributed to Byron, the popular poet of the age. They afterwards crept into some foreign editions of his works, and are even at the present day often ascribed to him.

One of the odes in this volume records the lecture delivered by Sydney Smith on "The Sublime," and the gay dresses and toilettes of his fair audience. There is much wit and elegance in the poem, which is after the manner of Gray; but it was only suggested by Miss Fanshawe, and written by Miss Berry. (Mr. Harness often met this lady in society; she received the sobriquet of Blackberry from her dark eyes, and to distinguish her from her sister, who received the uncomplimentary title of Goose-berry).

The following specimen of Miss Fanshawe's humorous talent was much admired by one of the late Prime Ministers:

SPEECH OF THE MEMBER FOR OLDHAM.

Mr. Cobbett asked leave to bring in very soon
A Bill to abolish the sun and the moon.
The Honourable Member proceeded to state
Some arguments used in a former debate.
The heavenly bodies, like those upon earth,
Had, he said, been corrupt from the day of their birth;
With reckless profusion expending the light,
One after another, by day and by night.
And what classes enjoyed it? The upper alone,
Upon such they had always exclusively shone:
But when had they ever emitted a spark
For the people who toil underground, in the dark—
The people of England, the miners and borers,
Of earth's hidden treasures the skilful explorers?
But their *minds* were enlightening; they learn every hour
That discussion is knowledge, and knowledge is power.
Long humbled and crushed, like a giant they rise,
And sweep off the cobwebs that darken the skies;
To sunshine and moonshine their duties assign,
And claim equal rights for the mountain and mine.
Turn to other departments. High time to inquire
What abuses exist in air, water, and fire.
Why keep up volcanoes? that idle display!
That pageant was all very well in its day;
But the reign of utility now has commenced,
And wisdom with such exhibitions dispensed.
When so many were starving with cold, it was cruel
To make such a waste of good fire and fuel.
As for Nature, how little experience had taught her
Appeared in the administration of water.
Was so noble a capital duly employed?
Or was it by few (if by any) enjoyed?

Poured on marshes and fens which were better without,
While pasture and arable perished for drought;
When flagrant injustice so often occurs
Abler hands must be wanted and younger than hers;
Not to speak of old Ocean's insatiable needs,
Or of seas so ill-ploughed they bear nothing but weeds.
At some future day he perhaps should be able
To lay the details of their cost on the table.
At present, no longer the House to detain,
He'd confine his remarks to the subject of rain.
Was it wanted? A more economical plan,
More equably working, more useful to man,
In this age of improvement might surely be found,
By which all would be sprinkled, and none would be drowned.
He would boldly appeal to the nation's good sense,
Not to sanction this useless, enormous expense.
If the wind did but shift, if a cloud did but lower,
What millions of rain-drops were spent in a shower?
Let them burst through the shackles of wind and of weather,
Do away with the office of rain altogether;
Let the whole be remodelled on principles new,
And consolidate half the old funds into *dew*.

* * * *

He hoped that the House a few minutes would spare
While he offered some brief observations on air.
Not the sun nor the moon, nor earth, water, or fire,
Nor Tories themselves when with Whigs they conspire,
Were half so unjust, so despotic, so blind,
So deaf to the cries and the claims of mankind,
As air and his wicked prime minister, wind.
Goes forth the despoiler, consuming the rations
Designed for the lungs of unborn generations!
What a waste of the elements made in a storm!
And all this comes on in the teeth of Reform!
Hail, lightning, and thunder, in volleys and peals!
The tropics are trembling, the universe reels;

Come whirlwind and hurricane, tempest, tornadoes,
Woe! woe! to Antigua, Jamaica, Barbadoes!
Plantations uprooted, and sugar dissolved;
Rum, coffee, and spice in ruin involved;
And while the Caribbees were ruined and rifled,
Not a breeze reached Guiana, and England was stifled!
Rate all that exists at its practical worth—
'Twas a system of humbug from heaven to earth!
These abuses must cease—they had lasted too long;
Was there anything right? Was not everything wrong?
The crown was too costly, the Church was a curse;
Old Parliaments bad, Reformed Parliaments worse;
All revenues ill-managed, all wants ill-provided;
Equality, liberty, justice derided!
But the people of England no more would endure
Any remedy short of a Radical cure.
Instructed, united, a nation of Sages
Would look with contempt on the wisdom of ages;
Provide for the world a more just legislature,
And impose an agrarian law upon Nature.

In speaking of Cobbett's private life, Mr. Harness observed that he was somewhat tyrannical in his own house, and not, as Sir H. Bulwer states, "under petticoat government."

CHAPTER V.

PARISH DUTIES.—SUCCESS IN THE PULPIT.—STYLE AND DELIVERY.—ATTACHMENT TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.—CAUSES OF RITUALISM.—UNIMPORTANT DISTINCTIONS.—DUTIES OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN.—OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.—SKETCH OF OLD ENGLISH PATRIARCHAL LIFE—PSALMODY.

THE most conspicuous period in Mr. Harness's career commenced on his removal to London. He was at this time private chaplain to the Dowager Countess Delaware, and became successively morning Preacher at Trinity Chapel, Conduit Street, and Minister and Evening Lecturer at St. Ann's, Soho; appointments which proved how much his talent as a preacher was esteemed. A note casually jotted down on the back of one of his sermon cases, in commiseration of some country visitors, bears incidental testimony that even at this early stage he commanded the confidence of the most eminent clergymen in the metropolis:—"Sept. 7, 1823: I preached to-day at St. George's, St. Pancras, and the Magdalen, and was heard at each place by the same party from the country, who went to St. George's to hear the Dean of Carlisle, to St. Pancras to hear

Moore, and to the Magdalen to hear Pitman! Poor creatures! they were ignorant that the great preachers are away in September!" In 1825, Mr. Harness was appointed Minister of Regent Square Chapel, St. Pancras, an important and arduous post, which he occupied for twenty years. His success in the pulpit was the principal cause of his being selected for it; and during his time the chapel was densely crowded, not only by parishioners, but by members of other congregations. A large increase took place in the pew-rents, but unfortunately he did not profit by it, for his stipend was limited to £400 a year, the surplus being appropriated to the support of other places of worship. He was obliged, out of that sum, to provide two curates, and to contribute to the charitable relief of a population of 20,000 souls; so that, taken on the whole, he found his clerical remuneration less than when he was only a curate on £60 a year.

Mr. Harness was, from this time, enrolled among the most able and popular preachers of the day. He had continually invitations to preach at neighbouring churches, and young clergymen attended to take notes of his sermons, many of which were afterwards printed at the express desire of the congregation.*

* In a letter to Mr. Harness, dated 1832, I find the following request, somewhat characteristic of the times:—"A friend of mine in a distant part of the country has been appointed by the bishop of his

His teaching was characterized by learning and moderation. "Our Religion," he often observed, "is the Religion of common sense;" and he never was intentionally sensational, or attempted anything approaching to declamation. But he had a constant advantage in a soft, expressive voice and correct ear. At the commencement of a discourse he was occasionally somewhat too rapid in his delivery, owing to his being a victim to that nervousness from which so many eloquent men have suffered; and he was wont to say that at any time throughout his whole career he felt, on entering the pulpit, as though he might have been "stricken down by a feather." But as he proceeded he became deliberate and powerful, and his consistent life and conversation gave weight to the nobleness of his sentiments. There was something in his manner which showed that he felt and practised what he taught—an excellence without which no preaching can be effectual. Sometimes, when speaking of the pain inflicted on sensitive natures by broken faith or false calumny, he was unable to

diocese to preach before the judges at the approaching assizes. He is apprehensive of not doing justice to the occasion, and desires me to endeavour to procure him the assistance of some gentleman of known ability. The advantageous terms in which I have heard my friend Miss Aikin speak of you has induced me to take the liberty of asking whether you would be disposed to give my friend the assistance of your pen."

restrain himself, and betrayed visible emotion. In those days the impulses of the heart appear to have been stronger or under less control than they are at present, and it not unfrequently occurred that the congregation were so deeply affected that they openly gave way to their feelings. Miss Mitford mentions an occasion on which Mrs. Siddons was moved to tears during one of Mr. Harness's discourses.

The views he entertained with regard to doctrine were characterized by a just veneration for the past. He had a high esteem for the piety and learning of the primitive fathers, diligently studied their commentaries, and frequently enriched his discourses with extracts from their writings. Speaking of these men, and of the reverence due to the great creeds of which they were the authors or first expositors, "I differ," he observes, "from the Romanists; and why? Because they have added no less than thirteen articles to the creed which from the time of the apostles to the Council of Trent (a space of no less than fifteen hundred years) was the faith of the Church. I also differ from the Dissenters; and why? Because, with the exception of the first article, which declares the existence of 'God the Father Almighty,' there is no article of the Creed which is not impugned by some of them. Those persons," he continues, "do appear to me to exhibit a most insane ambition, a most capricious love of

licence, a most child-like impatience of intellectual guidance, who would wilfully put aside that traditional teaching of the Church which instructs them in what sense the Holy Scriptures were read and understood by the immediate disciples of the apostles, and by the early bishops, for the sake of obtaining the dangerous privilege of wandering abroad, without a guide, in the immeasurable field of theological speculation, and putting themselves in possession of the liberty of judging wrong. I thank God that His merciful and ever-careful Providence has not entrusted the weak and fallible powers of my understanding with so perilous an enfranchisement."

And again :—"As I stand within the venerable shade of some old abbey—of Netley or of Kirkstall, of Fountains or of Tintern—and as I mark the devastation which has befallen it, I lament the ruin of so much beauty and magnificence. I feel as indignant as any can at the impiety of the barbarous and sacrilegious men by whose command, or by whose hands, a temple so worthy the service of the Almighty has been despoiled and desecrated. But the moral which such scenes suggest to me is very different from that which the Romanist and men of his inclining would impress upon our minds. I see in them the traces of the Divine judgment on the offending church of our ancestors; and I derive

from them most pregnant admonitions for the church of our own age. God's word assures me that so extensive a destruction would never have been permitted to waste the houses of God throughout the land, if in them His name had been honoured with a pure and simple worship, as in the days of old, and if they had never been perverted to idolatrous and superstitious uses. 'The wicked are the sword of the Lord;' and that sword would never have been allowed to cut so deeply, or to range so widely, if it had not been called into action by the iniquities of the Church."

Whilst Mr. Harness strongly denounced and reprobated the conduct of those churches which had fallen away from the early Apostolic faith, he bore noble testimony to the purity of the Church of England, of which he was always a staunch and consistent supporter. He speaks as follows of the age of the Reformation, and of the great men by whom the foundations of our church were laid—:

"In acquiring the knowledge necessary for the accomplishment of this wise and holy scheme of Reformation, Cranmer and his friends applied for instruction to every quarter from which instruction might be gained. They not only carefully weighed every intimation of the New Testament, but they consulted the writings of the Early Fathers. They not only looked for information to the Epistles of

the Apostles, but they inquired into the primitive constitution of the churches to which those epistles were addressed. In thus acting, they pursued the course which Melancthon had most earnestly advocated." * * * "Our church became what it is in the very brightest era of the English intellect. At a time when strong, energetic, manly good sense was the characteristic of the English people; when the sound mind delighted to entertain the thought of vast and arduous enterprises, and the sound body felt itself capable of achieving them; when Bacon, by the vigour of his understanding, set philosophy free from the region of misty speculations within which she had been for centuries confined, and brought her into contact with realities; when Shakespeare invested the maxims of a moral wisdom which can never perish with the beauties of a poetry which can never be surpassed; when our island was fruitful of such men and her people were capable of appreciating their worth, our National Church received her present form and government, her liturgy, her offices, her homilies, and her articles; and every document which interprets her mind bears the stamp of the masculine intellect of the period during which her restoration was gradually perfected. The peculiar characteristic of the Church of England is derived from that sound common sense which characterized the age of her spiritual

revival, and by which all her great authorities are distinguished.

In a letter to Mr. Culling, a Dissenter, he thus combats certain objections made to the endowments of the Church of England:

"Kensington Gore, Dec. 1st, 1848.

"My dear Sir,

"What a strange thing human nature is! and how very strange that two persons who, I sincerely believe, both look for the truth of things, and nothing else, should come to such opposite conclusions as you and I! Why should not the Bishops have carriages and horses, as well as any Christian gentleman of the same income? And why should deep learning, like that of the Bishop of Lincoln, or Lichfield, or Peterborough, or Ely, or of the late and present Archbishops of Canterbury, be denied a rate of income in the Church which it would have commanded at the Bar or in Medicine? I cannot see any reason. And I can see many strong reasons why it should be so rewarded, particularly the reason of old Bishop Jewel, which is (I forget the exact words), 'that men who dedicate themselves to the Ministry don't require such inducements, but they are wanting to induce parents to educate their sons for the Ministry.' Christianity has nothing to do, according to my views of the

Gospel, with the possession of the riches and distinctions of life; but it has to do with the humility, the self-denial, and the grateful temper with which they are held; and I must say that, in my somewhat extended range of intercourse with society, I have oftener met those dispositions among the *few* residents of palaces, whom it has been my good fortune to be acquainted with, than among the *many* whom I have daily intercourse with in my own and humbler walks of life. I must think that every class of society, from the highest to the lowest, ought to have the Ministers of the Gospel circulating in habits of intimacy among them; and those of the highest class must be possessed of incomes suitable to the station of the persons whom they have to live among, or they would (till the world is very different in its moral condition from what it is) very soon find themselves excluded from the sphere of their usefulness, *in which* they are so useful. Voluntary poverty was one of the inventions of Popery, adopted from the Jewish sect of the Essenes; but it never was a part of the Christian religion. Neither is the example of our Blessed Lord to be servilely copied in its actions, but in its principles. In submission to the Divine Will, He did His duty in going about the Holy Land for *three* years, out of *thirty-three*, 'doing good;' and it is the duty of every ordinary Christian

who would evince an equal submission to the Divine Will, to copy those retired and laborious thirty years of his Saviour's life which were spent in the home of His parents in Nazareth. A Bishop in his palace, if a Christian, shows us how a Christian nobleman ought to live; as a rector or a curate, if God's grace be with him, may set an example for humbler disciples of our Lord to follow.

"As to the sale of livings; those only are sold which are *private property*, and generally the private property of laymen. And whatever notional objections may lie against the practice, I can see none in theory or in expediency; but just the reverse. If a young man, who has spent several thousands of pounds on his education, purchases a living of £180 a year (like that mentioned in your advertisement), from which he will not derive perhaps above £8 per cent per annum on the purchase money, it is a guarantee that he has an independent income, and that a gentleman is going to reside in, and take the duty of, a remote agricultural parish, who will be employing, and spending money among the population, as well as attending to their spiritual instruction. As a dissenter, you have no notion of the immense amount of private property which is thus brought into the Church and scattered over the country by persons who love their profession and are careless of its emoluments. I had, the day

before yesterday, a gentleman with me who relinquished a practice at the Bar which was producing him between £1,500 and £2,000 a year, to take orders, *and go to live on a small cure of* £30 *a year* which he had possessed himself of in Oxfordshire. I don't like speaking of myself; but, this year, I have disbursed on the schools, the clothing fund, and the sick poor of our district (I confine my relief entirely to the sick) more than three times the amount of my stipend as Minister of the District, which (including Easter offerings) is about £40. All that my experience and reading teach me of the Church and its Ministers is that there is no form of Christianity so pure and apostolic in its doctrines and discipline; and that, in spite of some weak and some wicked members of the flock, I know no such learned, accomplished, and self-denying men *out* of the Ministry as I am acquainted with *in it.* And, remember, they make no fuss about it!

"I am ashamed to have bored you with this long letter; but, as the French philosopher says, 'I have not time to write a short one;' and I did not like you to remain unanswered.

"We shall, clearly, never agree on these Church matters; but there is one matter on which we are perfectly agreed: Mrs. Barbauld's prose is, I think, much better than her poetry. But she lived in a good age of *prose* writers, and at the end of a good,

but not the best, sort of *verse* writers; and while in the latter, as a clever artist, she was not inferior to many, in the former she was superior to most of her contemporaries.

"Believe me to be, my dear Sir,

"Yours very faithfully,

"W. HARNESS."

The views which Mr. Harness entertained on Church subjects were essentially moderate and unassuming. Many passages in his sermons showed that he had no sympathy with Ritualism, or that "morbid delicacy of sense which requires that the sight may rest on graceful forms and emblazoned ornament and an ever-changing picture." "Nothing histrionic," he observes, "can be consistent with the spirit of our services." But he nevertheless desired to assuage the bitterness of party spirit, was willing to grant a certain latitude to those with whom he differed, and considered that the unhappy contests in our Church were generally about unimportant or obscure matters. He longed to see unity among Christians, and exhorted to forbearance and brotherly love.

"If there be any to whom the magnificence of architecture and the charms of music afford valuable assistance to devotion, is it fair that we whose imaginations are pleased by a more simple worship,

should interfere with those whose imaginations are differently affected, so long as the same liturgical services are retained, and no ceremonies are admitted which might afford an opening for the insidious introduction of false doctrine? If a man change his habitual attendance at some well-regulated cathedral service for the service of a small village church, where the prayers are only moderately well read, the sermon is not unsuited to the place, and no other music is heard than the psalmody of the rustic congregation, he will find his devotional feeling unusually elevated, and will conceive that such an humble and simple worship is most in harmony with the humble and simple character of the Gospel. But, on the other hand, if a man who has been all his life accustomed to that village service be introduced to the solemnities of a cathedral, a similar vividness of the devotional sentiment will be awakened by the novelty, and he will confess that the Creator, in such a noble worship, is honoured as He ought to be by His creatures. Both are good; both are salutary."

"How really trivial are the questions about which differences are raised! With what astonishment and pity do you read of the disputes which agitated the controversial leaders of early times; the unintelligible subtilties of their theology; their presumptuous attempt to subject the essence of the

Godhead to the analysis of human metaphysics! Reviewing such discussions, calmly and from a distance, we comprehend how useless and how vain they were. But they appear as the emanations of wisdom itself in comparison with those of our own days. Their arguments (however presumptuously entered on or mystically treated) were almost always connected with the most important article of Revelation—the Divinity of the Messiah's nature. But what are the miserable grounds on which we (in an age of great religious light, and in opposition to our Lord's command) are idle enough to quarrel? Why, we cannot agree whether the same prayers shall be read or intoned; whether the sermon shall be delivered in the clerical or the academic dress; whether the Minister shall stand in front or at the side of the Lord's table! And for matters so frivolous as these (which have no reference to piety—which concern the antiquary rather than the Christian) we do not scruple to range ourselves on one side or the other, with all the bitter animosities of the partisan."

Mr. Harness was in every sense a minister of peace. Exhortations to mutual forbearance and consideration formed a leading characteristic in his teaching. He inculcated this duty not only with reference to political and religious questions, but also to those smaller and apparently unimportant

matters which occur in ordinary every-day life. In this exhortation he had more immediately in view the prevention of family dissensions. He said that he ceased to be astonished at the disruption of domestic ties, when he considered the rude and overbearing manner which relations too often assumed towards each other—a manner which no stranger would for a moment tolerate.

He frequently warned parents of their responsibility with regard to the education of their children, and of the influence which example and precept exercise upon the young. "You may in words," he observed, "teach your children that they ought to believe and obey the Gospel; but unless you yourselves practice what you teach, the lesson is in vain. You sow the good seed with one hand, and the seed of tares with the other. But the weed is cast more strongly, and received on a more congenial soil, and it strikes root and grows up and thrives and fructifies, while the good seed only rests upon the surface and dries up and perishes away." In continuing the subject, he observes that a child is instructed by its parent, that Heaven is the only object worthy of pursuit, and that he should exert all his energies to attain it; but how is this excellent truth enforced upon the young? "Does the parent, as the child grows up, direct him to follow the example of pious and self-

sacrificing men? Does he enlarge upon the wisdom of those who, regardless of all earthly interests, have pressed on, like Christian, possessed of but one idea, 'Life—Life—Eternal Life?' No! Is not the hero he sets before his son the 'successful' man of the world, who, without any reference to a future state, has striven most successfully in this; who has pushed all his little advantages to the utmost; who has toiled and toiled, and spared and spared, until he has at length outstripped his competitors in the race for this world's honours and emoluments? By teaching the great principles of religious truth to your child, and not living in correspondence with the principles you inculcate, you do a far worse thing than teach those principles in vain; you altogether destroy the influence of religious impressions upon th[redacted] of your child. While you speak to him of the rewards of an everlasting life, you induce him by your conduct to suppose that those rewards are matters of very insignificant consideration."

And not only did he inculcate mutual confidence and consideration upon those who were members of the same family, but also upon all who lived under the same roof. "He who has known the worth of an honest and abiding servant, knows that no price can be adequate to that servant's value, and that there is more of grateful affection mingled with the

esteem which is borne towards that humble member of his family than is commonly extended towards any being in whose veins the blood of kindred does not flow. But that amicable bond is the effect of confidence, and the slightest act of fraud, or falsehood, or duplicity will sever it at once and for ever. Confidence is of slow growth, but rapid in decay. Like a bird of timid nature, if once disturbed, she will abandon the nest, and return to it no more. Like that tree of which the poet speaks, if only a leaf be broken off, the whole plant will wither away. And from the moment that confidence is lost, the feelings of mutual kindness which should subsist between those who rule and those who serve in the same house, are exchanged for suspicion of wrong on the one hand, and the fear of detection on the other."

Mr. Harness had a great affection for tried and faithful servants; so much so that he erected a stained glass window in his church to the memory of his aged nurse. He loved to recall the times when servants and masters lived together as members of the same family, with mutual respect and common interests; and in a passage in which he deplores the change which has now taken place, he sketches a pleasing picture of their former confidential relations:—"Worldly circumstances used not to sever classes. A little more than fifty years

ago, when Crabbe the poet resided for some time in the house of Mr. Tovell, a gentleman of considerable landed property in Suffolk, he found the drawing- and dining-rooms only opened on state occasions, and the family generally living with the domestics in the old-fashioned kitchen; where, while the master of the house read his book or his newspaper by the capacious fire-side, the lady sat at a little round table superintending the work, and working with the maids. In this manner kindly feelings were naturally produced; civilization was diffused by intercourse; and the science of house management acquired by the servant at the hall was carried with her on her marriage to make the comfort of her husband's cottage. In houses of a higher rank, there were always some domestics who had lived long enough in the family to be considered as a part of it; who held a confidential place in the regard of the lord or lady; and who formed a connecting link between them and the menials—every one of whom, perhaps, was born on the estate; while a knowledge of the merits or demerits, the weal or woe, of all was maintained by the superintendence of that most important but now obsolete member of every large establishment, the chaplain. This tie of friendly care on the one hand, and of attached dependence on the other, has been gradually loosened. Instead of it, there has grown up, be-

tween master and servant, a cold, unsympathising, incommunicable distance—an obstinate, impenetrable reserve—which exists in no other country, which every really Christian heart feels it painful to keep up, and which no one of ordinary good-nature could think of maintaining towards a dog or a cat that he happened to come as frequently in contact with. By such a state of things both parties are losers; the master and the mistress, perhaps, the most. It may be taken as a rule without exception that the members of a family cannot live long in a state of indifference towards each other. If they are not united by feelings of regard, they will be severed by feelings of enmity. If the master takes no care to attach his domestics by words and acts of kindness, they very soon begin to look upon him with an evil eye, to lose all concern for his interests; and if they abstain from defrauding him themselves, they rejoice in the success of the cheat by which he is defrauded. It is only latterly that all the links of good feeling between the higher and lower members of the same household have been broken asunder. They used to be bound together by a joint interest in the younger branches of the family. Some years ago, there still remained the old footman, or the grey-headed groom, or the trusty nursemaid to whom the children could be safely given in charge—who loved the children, and were loved by

them in turn. But now, these are exploded. What is wanted is the restoration of an humbler, kindlier, freer manner of intercourse between manufacturers and their men, farmers and their labourers, masters of families and their domestic servants. I hardly know a more disgusting piece of hypocrisy than that which I see at the present day so constantly exhibited, when some arrogant woman of fashion, who treats her country neighbour with supercilious incivility, her less exclusive relatives with the coldest indifference, and her domestics with a most withering stiffness, passes by all the legitimate objects of her kindness, and goes out of her way to lavish her factitious sympathy and capricious interest on the unknown inmates of some garret or cellar of a London alley."

In another passage, he deprecates the tendency of the present day to estimate intellectual abilities above private virtues:—"Every age has its peculiar species of idolatry, and intellect is the idol of our own. Discoveries in science, success in art, reputation in literature, power as a public speaker, are the first objects of popular admiration. To attain some such triumph is the great aim of our ambition. And if a man be thus intellectually distinguished, that is quite sufficient. The actions of his life (unless flagrantly scandalous), or the qualities of his character (unless socially offensive), are

allowed to pass as venial, or become altogether lost sight of in the glory of his intellectual celebrity. Now, that exaggerated value of talent would be reasonable enough if the whole world were an exhibition room—if our life were a show—and if we drew our chief happiness from the applause of popular assemblies. But as such is not the case, as the feats of science and the dexterities of art do little more than amuse us for the moment, and as the general well-being of existence never can depend on the cheers of a multitude, but on the character of the few with whom we have intercourse from hour to hour in our daily business and concerns, it appears self-evident that the sterling moral virtues (which promote our permanent happiness), and not the showy intellectual accomplishments (which merely serve for our occasional entertainment), are the qualities which deserve to be held dearest in the estimation of mankind."

In ordering the performance of Divine Service, it was Mr. Harness's care that it should be conducted with simplicity and decorum—in the "old way" to which he had been accustomed when young. Several persons endeavoured, on various occasions, to introduce into his church emblematic devices and a more effective ritual; but he systematically resisted such attempts. Novelties in religion were, in his opinion, self-condemned. In one respect he carried

out this opinion to a point where it seemed to partake of prejudice: he would allow no hymns to be sung in his church, nor any psalms but those of David. He expresses his views on this subject in a passage in which he thus beautifully alludes to the composer of these songs of Zion:—

"David is introduced to us as a shepherd lad having charge over the few sheep of his father. His only occupation during the long solitary day was to keep his flock together, to prevent their wandering, and to defend them against harm. This light employ, though not devoid of its cares and dangers, abounds in leisure. He devotes his companionless and unoccupied hours to familiarizing his hand with the rude harp of his country; and so perfect a mastery does he attain over it, that when music is required to soothe the passion-troubled mind of his sovereign, none other can be found whose skill is to be compared with that of David, the shepherd lad from the mountains of Bethlehem. And to what themes does he make the melodies of that harp subservient! Its notes are tuned, its strings are touched, to the highest of all arguments—the praises of Jehovah. As he passes his lonely hours with his flock; as he leads them to their pasture grounds at morning and at evening; as he reposes with them in the shade during the sultry hours of mid-day; as he keeps watch over

them by night beneath the starry canopy of Heaven, his soul, awakened to a pious sense of gratitude by the beauty and the grandeur of the scenes around him, finds expression for the ardour of its emotions in hymns of adoration and thanksgiving to the Creator. From that age to our own the hymns of that shepherd youth have been accepted among the Psalms of the Church. They have, for well nigh three thousand years, been reverenced as supplying the most appropriate terms in which the children of God, from generation to generation, could pour forth their offerings of gratitude and praise before the throne of their Heavenly Father. As hymns, reflecting the various changes of religious feeling, they have never been equalled. Even in our metrical translation (hurried and careless as it is) every man of educated taste will feel how immeasurably superior the Psalms of David are to all those devotional compositions of modern times, which, with their trifling conceits, their sentimental prettinesses, their affected unction, and their insidious heresy, have, in so many congregations, been allowed to supersede them."

Some minor reasons for his objection to the introduction of other psalms were—that it rendered the Prayer Book insufficient for the service, and that it necessitated the selection of one of those Hymn Books, none of which he considered alto-

gether satisfactory. One of his churchwardens, who was aware of his peculiar views, asked him one day, twittingly, whether he would not adopt "Hymns Ancient and Modern?" "I would as soon read 'Paradise Lost' for the first lesson," was his terse reply.

Nevertheless, on some Church questions Mr. Harness was in advance of his age—especially with regard to the revision of the Bible. Writing in the *Edinburgh Review* he notices "the mischief that has ben inflicted on the sense of the inspired writings by the mode of breaking them up into chapter and verse;" and, speaking further of the translation, he observes that the phrase of the Hebrew language is retained to a most confusing extent. He cites such instances as the following, "the covenant of salt," meaning "a friendly contract." "They are crushed in the gate," for "they are found guilty in a Court of Justice." "The colour of the lips," for "praises and thanksgivings," "I have given you cleanness of teeth," meaning "extreme scarcity." "Such are," he observes, the sort of Hebraisms of which Selden says, "what gear do the common people make of them?" He also objects to the combination of all the books of Scripture into one volume, rendering it either small in type or inconvenient in size. "If a man would fain take his evening walk into the fields, with the

Prophecies of Isaiah as his companion, it is no light grievance to him that he must either forego his inclination, or carry along with him at the same time the Law of Moses and the History of the Jews, the Psalms of David and the Proverbs of Solomon."

One of the most remarkable circumstances connected with Mr. Harness's cure in St. Pancras was, that he was brought into close proximity with the celebrated Edward Irving, who was then attracting many followers. The Scotch church was on the opposite side of Regent Square, and the performances which took place in it were so distasteful to Mr. Harness, and led astray so many weak brethren, that—although with great reluctance, for he disliked polemical discussions—he preached a sermon (afterwards published) in which he pointed out the utter groundlessness of Mr. Irving's pretensions.

He showed how different were the unintelligible rhapsodies of the Irvingites from that Divine gift of foreign languages which was so necessary for Gospel missionaries in the early centuries. "There is nothing," he observes, "so frugal as Providence. What! persons inspired to speak languages unknown to others and unintelligible to themselves! As a blessing, a gift, a grace, an illumination from the Almighty to His saints, there is nothing parallel to this to be met with in the whole range of the

Scriptures; and, as a punishment, a blindness, and a curse upon his enemies, it surpasses even the malediction against the people of Babel." In a letter to a friend, in which he reiterates his commendation of the sober, steady teaching of the Church of England, Mr. Harness observes, "Edward Irving told me several times that he could not understand why he met with no such true Christians as in the *orthodox* Church of England. He used the word 'orthodox' in the sense of anti-Calvinistic. And even when we were standing talking in Regent Square, on one side of which his church stood, and mine on the other, he said, pointing first to his own, and then to mine, 'I don't know how it is I have no such humble, quiet Christians *here* as you contrive to assemble about you *there*!' That cannot be a bad system which works such effects."

The influence which Mr. Irving exerted, not only over a large section of the laity, but also over some of the clergy, is thus casually alluded to in a postscript to a letter from Dr. Milman to Mr. Harness:—"Can you send me a good, steady, humble-minded curate? I have just parted with one after three months, who will be a follower of Irving in three more—the acting of the Strand Theatre with the reasoning faculties of St. Luke's; *d'ailleurs*, a good kind of young man."

CHAPTER VI.

ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL INTERCOURSE.—FRIENDSHIPS WITH REMARKABLE MEN.—KINDNESS OF LORD LANSDOWNE.—CRABBE.—SCOTT.—COLERIDGE.—JOANNA BAILLIE.—MISS MARTINEAU.

ASCETICISM, as we have already observed, formed no part of Mr. Harness's creed; he took no misanthropic view of the world: on the contrary, he loved society and its humanizing influences. Naturally of a genial disposition, he found himself everywhere welcomed by those who appreciated his talents and his gentle and retiring manners. A certain amount of social intercourse he considered indispensably necessary for the maintenance of a duly-balanced mind; and he believed that some of the writings of our eminent literary men would have been more generally valuable, had their authors not too much secluded themselves from the outer world. He did not consider it to be the duty of a Christian to avoid the society of his fellow-men, even though he might disapprove of their conduct. "If the practice of withdrawing ourselves from the more promiscuous society of our

fellow-creatures, under the hope of attaining greater facilities of salvation, has a natural tendency to foster our spiritual pride and destroy our charity, there is nothing which will more readily conduce to humble that pride and rectify our views—to instruct us in the virtues we have overlooked in others and the defects we have neglected in ourselves—than such a degree of impartial intercourse with all classes of men as a Christian (without any compromise of principle or sacrifice of duty) may holily entertain. There is not perhaps a single individual of our race but may prove to be our superior in some moral or intellectual quality; and there is consequently no individual of our race from whom we may not derive an experimental lesson in humility. As there is no man so righteous as to be wholly free from evil, neither is there any man so depraved as to be wholly destitute of good .... If there be many lessons of heavenly import which the worldly man may receive from the disciple of the Gospel, there are also admonitions on very material points of duty for which the disciple of the Gospel may in return be indebted to him."

Mr. Harness obeyed the Apostle's injunction "to use the world as not abusing it." He was not a man to lose the instruction or refreshment which social intercourse affords; and it was one of the happiest features in his character that, notwith-

standing the laborious duty of a London parish, which made him daily conversant with all that was destitute and depressing, his mind still remained vigorous and elastic, and equal to taking an interest in the brighter paths of life. Especially was he attracted to the study of human nature, and of the varying phases of our emotions; and the insight thus obtained gave additional success to his persuasive exhortations in the pulpit. Not only was he adapted to benefit by social intercourse, but also to shine in it; indeed the sowing and reaping are in this case closely connected. "From the first," writes Miss Mitford, "he took rank as one of the best conversationalists of the day." And in a later letter she says, "He is one of the finest preachers in London, but still better known as the friend of all that has been eminent for the last forty years, having lived in the closest intimacy with every person who combined high talent with fair character. It is to the honour of the highest part of the aristocracy, the Lord Lansdownes and Lord Derbys, that he has invitations to dinner amongst them every day through the season, and very many to stay on visits at large country-houses. Certainly he is the most charming person that ever trod the earth, and as good as he is charming."

The pleasure derived by others from his information gave him the means of increasing his store

of knowledge, and he thus enjoyed opportunities such as seldom fall to the lot of any one individual. He had also gifts which enabled him to turn these opportunities to account. Ordinary persons would never have remarked the distinctive character of their friends' conversation; fewer would have noted particularly any of their observations; and fewer still would have remembered them in after-years, and been able to retail them in nearly their original words. But a man in whom memory and observation co-exist in such a high degree of excellence as to be equal to the task, is eminently qualified to be the social historian of his times. Had Mr. Harness committed to writing all the remarkable conversations in which he took part, we should have possessed such a history; but unfortunately he kept no record of them, and only accidentally quoted words and made allusions to them in his occasional intercourse with his friends. Broken flowers thus casually dropt can scarcely be formed into a closely woven wreath; but it would still be culpable to leave them to perish by the wayside, and preserve none of their sweet fragrance as an offering for future years.

"A society which, taken for all in all, has never been surpassed!" Such are the words in which Mr. Harness describes the social circle in which he lived. The limits of "society" were then more

defined than they are at present; and within those limits there was greater freedom and intimacy. Confidence was not restricted by the presence of those heterogeneous elements which disjoint the intercourse of the present day. The small aristocracy which then existed was one exclusively of birth, formed of men who had received a liberal education, and who had time which they were able to devote to the cultivation of elegant accomplishments. Hence arose the elaborate dandyism, the polished manners, the classical taste of the age when men

> "played and lost, and wooed and won,
> Like gentlemen and scholars,"

and which, notwithstanding its pedantry, leaves pleasant recollections of bygone days.

Literature had of late shown signs of life. 'Ronans' and 'Grecians' walked the London Parks; even Grub Street had produced some butterflies; and gentlemen had begun to apostrophize their mistresses, and ladies their lap-dogs, in odes which displayed a certain improvement in wit and sentiment. But now the talismanic names of Scott, Byron, and Wordsworth were to raise the *belles-lettres* to a position they had never occupied before, and to rivet the attention of a world not yet dazzled by the barbaric splendours of wealth. Literature became the fashion. The great autocrats of society, appearing as the Mæcenates of the day, did not disdain to

shine in the reflected lustre of their satellites, and to raise the nobility of rank by associating it with that of nature. The most conspicuous among these patrons was Lord Lansdowne, who was unwearied in his kindness and liberality to men of genius. Mr. Harness was not only indebted to this nobleman for many acts of hospitality, but also for a very substantial benefit conferred upon him shortly before he left St. Pancras. The office of Clerical Registrar to the Privy Council happened to fall vacant, and Lord Lansdowne immediately designed to offer it to his literary friend. He was himself too generous a man to be influenced by party prejudice, but he thought it necessary, for the satisfaction of his colleagues, to inquire of Dr. Milman whether their friend had ever published anything calculated to kindle political animosity. The Dean was able to give the fullest assurances on the point, for he well knew that Mr. Harness had always to the utmost in his power avoided every sort of polemical discussion. On receiving this intelligence, Lord Lansdowne wrote to make the offer, which was highly valued by its recipient, both as a proof of friendship and esteem, and as a material addition to his somewhat limited income.

Although it would be impossible to collect from memory one half of the brilliant fragments which made Mr. Harness's conversation so delightful, or

to reset them in their original mosaic, I have yet been tempted to undertake a certain amount of restoration; and, imperfect as such a work must be, I hope I may succeed in giving some idea of the variety and beauty of the store from whence these small specimens are derived.

Mr. Harness's recollections formed an interesting link between several generations of literary men. As a child he had known Joseph Warton, whose brother, the celebrated poet, had been acquainted with Pope; who, in turn, could remember to have seen Racine walking in his red stockings in Paris. Sir George Beaumont told him that when at Rome he had spoken to the donkey-man who had accompanied Claude and Gaspar Poussin on their sketching excursion to Tivoli. In his youth he remembered Dr. Parr—his snappish wit, and the long pipe he smoked after dinner; the latter causing him especial astonishment, as smoking was then rare and unfashionable. He might also have known Paley, but his information about him was probably derived from some of the tutors at Christ's College, to which the great apologist had himself belonged. Mr. Harness had several little anecdotes illustrative of Paley's homely manners and rough humour. At the first visitation he attended, after his preferment to the archdeaconry, he dined in company with a large assemblage of clergymen, all of whom were

eager to hear his observations. He remained silent, to their great disappointment, until the second course was served. At length the great man spoke; every ear was strained. What was his oracular utterance? "I don't think these *puddens* are much good unless the seeds are taken out of the raisins!" At another banquet, shortly after his perferment, he found himself exposed to an unpleasant draught of air. "Shut that window behind me," he called out to one of the waiters, "and open one lower down, behind one of the curates!"

Later than these was Crabbe, the poet, who after publishing "The Library," "The Village," and other poems, disappeared from public sight in a country living for two and twenty years, and was generally supposed to be dead, until he revived again in the "Register" in 1807, and re-entered London literary circles in 1813. Mr. Harness greatly admired his poems; perhaps he appreciated them the more because they referred so much to country parish life. He particularly noticed the beauty of a little story in the "Tales," where an heiress is prevented by a rich aunt from marrying a man of inferior position. She by degrees forgets him, and becomes entirely engrossed with the accumulation of money. Her lover, on the other hand, becomes poorer, and is at last an inmate of an alms-house. He reminds her of her promise, which she disowns.

"He shares a parish-gift; at church he sees
The pious Dinah dropped upon her knees;
Thence, as she walks the streets with stately air,
As chance directs, oft meet the parted pair;
When he, with thickest coat of badgeman's blue,
Moves near her shaded silk of changeful hue;
When his thin locks of gray approach her braid,
A costly purchase made in beauty's aid;
When his frank air, and his unstudied pace,
Are seen with her soft manner, air, and grace,
It might some wonder in a stranger move,
How these together could have talked of love."

Crabbe visited Edinburgh in 1822, when the festivities in honour of the arrival of George the Fourth drew together such a brilliant assemblage of rank and talent. Scott was too much engaged to do the honours for all his distinguished friends, and assigned some of them to Lockhart, who, to afford mutual gratification, introduced Crabbe to Brewster. Next day, to his consternation, Crabbe observed, "That Dr. Brewster seems an agreeable man—what is he?" and Brewster, on meeting Lockhart, inquired, "By-the-way, who was that old clergyman you brought to see me? Did you say his name was Crabbe?"

In the opening article of the "Quarterly," for January, 1868, a review appeared of the "Life of Scott," written by Dean Milman, and towards the end of it was the following reference:—"Proofs of the veneration in which all classes held him greeted

Scott wherever he went. Twice on the occasion of the Coronation of George the Fourth this was shown in a remarkable way. The Rev. Mr. Harness, the accomplished friend of Mrs. Siddons and Lord Byron, describes that, while he was standing in Westminster Hall, a spectator of the Coronation Feast, he observed Sir Walter trying, but in vain, to make his way through a crowd to a seat which had been reserved for him. 'There's Sir Walter Scott,' said Mr. Harness; 'let's make way for him.' There was no need for more; the throng pressed itself back so as to make a lane for Scott, and he passed through without the slightest inconvenience." Milman was writing from memory, and Mr. Harness told me that the facts were not quite accurately given in this account. Scott had been in Lord Willoughby's box, but had left it, and on returning found it full of ladies. He was accordingly left without a seat, and while looking hopelessly about was seen by Harness from the balcony, who immediately beckoned to him; and all the people, when they heard who he was, compressed themselves to make room for him. He said, however, that they were very anxious to know whether he was quite sure that he *was* Sir Walter Scott?

Few persons who heard him speak could have doubted Scott's nationality; it could not have been said with justice that Scott—

"hung
On the soft phrase of Southern tongue."

His accent, on the contrary, was so broad that Mr. Harness said he sometimes could not understand him without difficulty. One day when they had been talking of "Lucia di Lammermuir," which had lately appeared, he changed the subject by observing, "Weel! I think we've a'most had enow of that chiel." Literature, according to Scott's account, was much better paid then than it is at present; for on a friend asking him to subscribe to assist a poor author, he refused to comply, asserting that he knew no one worthy of the name—except Coleridge—who was not making from £500 to £12,000 a-year.

Mr. Harness used occasionally to visit Coleridge when the latter was staying with Mr. Gillman, the apothecary-doctor, at Highgate. The poet originally went there to recover his health, which he had broken down by over-indulgence in opium. He placed himself there under a sort of voluntary restraint, and strict orders were given by Mr. Gillman that no drugs of any kind were to be allowed him. Coleridge, missing the stimulant to which he had been long accustomed, pined and languished under the restriction; he abandoned his pen and sank into utter despondency. One day a large roll of papers came to the poet from the publisher, and on Mr. Gillman's visiting him in the evening he found him

an altered man; Coleridge was himself again, full of animation and energy, and busily employed in writing an article for the forthcoming *Review*. The change was so sudden and remarkable that the Doctor's suspicions were aroused. He instituted inquiries and found that a roll of opium had, at the Poet's entreaty, been enclosed in the packet which had arrived that morning from the publisher.

Eminent literary men have often been remarkable for the fertility of their conversation, and their powers in this respect have not unfrequently been used without due restraint and discrimination. Coleridge was no exception to this rule; he would continue to talk on in an unbroken flow, and connect his arguments and observations so adroitly that until you had left him you could not detect their fallacy* Mr. Harness called on him one day with Milman, on their return from paying a visit to Joanna Baillie. The poet seemed unusally inspired, and rambled on, raising his hands and his head in the manner which Charles Mathews so cleverly caricatured; and asserting, among other

* Wordsworth and Rogers called on him one forenoon in Pall Mall. He talked uninterruptedly for two hours, during which time Wordsworth listened with profound attention. On leaving, Rogers said to Wordsworth, "Well! I could not make head or tail of Coleridge's oration: did you understand it?" "Not a syllable," replied Wordsworth. Sometimes, however, his conversation was admirable.

strange theories, that Shakespeare was a man of too pure a mind to be able to depict a really worthless character. "All his villains," he said, "were bad upon good principles; even Caliban had something good in him." Coleridge, in his old age, became a characteristic feature in Highgate. He was the terror and amusement of all the little children who bowled their hoops along the poplar avenue. Notwithstanding his fondness for them—he called them 'Kingdom-of-Heaven-ites'—his Cyclopean figure and learned language caused them indescribable alarm. Sometimes he would lay his hand on the shoulders of one of them and walk along discoursing metaphysics to the trembling captive, while the rest fled for refuge and peeped out with laughing faces from behind the trees. "I never," he exclaimed one day to the baker's boy—"I never knew a man good because he was religious, but I have known one religious because he was good."

We can scarcely mention Coleridge without being reminded of his friend and schoolfellow Charles Lamb. On reading the life of this author, lately published by Barry Cornwall, Mr. Harness observed that it must surprise every one how such a clever man as Lamb could have said so few good things. He was chief jester to the "Morning Post," and though it by no means follows—he was a man of

undoubted wit. Mr. Harness remembered many bright bits of fun which from time to time sparkled in his conversation. On one occasion, an old lady was pouring into his ear a tirade, more remarkable for length than substance, when, observing that the Essayist was fast lapsing into a state of oblivion, she aroused him by remarking in a loud voice, "I'm afraid, Mr. Lamb, you are deriving no benefit from my observations!" "Well, Madam!" he replied, recollecting himself, "I cannot say that I am; but perhaps the lady on the other side of me is, for they go in at one ear and out of the other."

At another time, when making a journey in a stage-coach, after they had halted for dinner, a passenger presented himself, requesting accommodation. "Are you full inside?" asked the guard at the window. "I can't answer for the other gentlemen," replied Lamb, "but that pudding has done for *me*."

Elliston, the actor, a self-educated man, was playing cribbage one evening with Lamb, and on drawing out his first card, exclaimed, "When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war." "Yes," replied Lamb, "and when *you* meet Greek, you don't understand it."

The name of Lamb reminds us of the Burneys. Madame d'Arblay has written the following on

the fly-leaf of a presentation copy of her father's life:—"To the Rev. William Harness, to whose active good offices the immediate publication of this work is indebted."

Joanna Baillie, the authoress, was a great friend of Mr. Harness, who was a warm admirer of her genius. The following letter seems to be written in acknowledgment of the receipt of a copy of some of his published sermons. Mr. Harness, as I have before remarked, always took a genial view of the world, and of mankind in general, and never allowed the depravity of a certain portion of our nature to conceal the lustre of its more generous impulses.

"My dear Mr. Harness,

"I am very much obliged to you for your friendly present, and beg you will accept my best thanks. I have read your excellent sermons on the 'Image of God'* with much satisfaction, and hope they will find many readers who will agree with you as heartily as I do. You have made out your argument clearly, both from reason and Scripture, and I hope it will have a good effect on some of the gloomy Calvinists of these days, who seem so intent upon establishing eternal damnation as the decreed portion of the greater part of mankind, and are anxious

* Four sermons delivered by Mr. Harness at Cambridge when Select Preacher.

to cast a kindred gloom over every young person with whom they have influence.

"Was the subject given you by the University of Cambridge, or was it your own choosing? A more useful one could not have been taken up at the present time.

"I hope you and Miss Harness are well, and offer my sister's kind regards to you both, joined with those of your faithful friend.

"J. BAILLIE."

Among authoresses, Joanna Baillie ranked next to Miss Austen in Mr. Harness's estimation. The latter was his greater favourite, and he was never tired of reading and re-reading her novels. Loving quiet and domestic scenes, rather than the more exciting episodes of life, he preferred the simple story of "Persuasion," to those more stirring narratives upon which the fame of the authoress was founded. Miss Austen was very inadequately remunerated for her earlier productions; "Sense and Sensibility," her best, bringing her only £150, and she often remarked to Mr. Harness that she could not understand why at first she received so little, although afterwards she was so amply paid. Miss Mitford, in one of her letters, spoke somewhat disparagingly of Miss Austen. "Mamma says that she was the prettiest, silliest, most affected, husband-

hunting butterfly she ever remembers";* and this so offended Mr. Harness's jealous admiration of his favourite, that he took exception to it, and added the note: "Every other account of Jane Austen, from whatever quarter, represents her as handsome, graceful, amiable, and shy."

The following letter comes from the hand of another celebrated authoress:—

"Tynemouth, June 3rd, [ ]

"Dear Mr. Harness,

"My friend Mrs. Reid has just arrived; and she brings me the very agreeable news that your sermons are coming to me from yourself. I had seen the advertisement, with a sort of envious feeling of those in whose way that book would come; and I am not a little pleased at the prospect of having it, and from your hand.

"A parcel will soon be coming to me from Mrs. Reid's (6, Grenville Street, Brunswick Square), and I shall be much obliged if you will either have the book left there, or tell her servants to which of my publishers to send for the parcel.

"Some months ago, when publishing 'The Hour and the Man,' I ordered a copy to be sent to you. I did this, not with any idea that you would not

* Miss Mitford's letter of April 3rd, 1815, to Sir William Elford. See Vol I., at pages 305-6 of her Life.

discover and feel the artistical faults of the book, or with any hope that you, who have never known negroes in any but a degraded state, could believe them to be what I have represented; but because I remember your saying that it must be the most delightful thing in the world to spend a summer in the country, in the exclusive society of one's own personages. It is true, you doubtless took for granted two very important things which I had not —health, and the power of going out of doors; but still I found your words so far true as to be moved to send you the book; and I hope you received it.

"You will have heard (so many common friends as we have) that I am not better, nor expecting to be so. Your experience among the sick will prevent your being surprised, perhaps, at what has surprised me—that I have never once felt the slightest and most transient desire to be well. The divine repose of *life in two rooms* (especially with a fine sea-view); the simplification of duty to one rather prone to be tender-conscienced; and the perpetual feast of the heart administered by the kindness of friends, are good things, in the midst of which bodily troubles are lost and forgotten on review, if not from moment to moment. Into another part of the matter, Pascal had insight: 'Quand on se porte bien, on ne comprend pas comment on pourrait faire si l'on était malade; et quand on l'est, on prend médecine gaie-

ment : le mal y résout. On n'a plus les passions et les désirs des divertissements et des promenades, que la santé donnait, et qui sont incompatibles avec les nécessités de la maladie. La nature donne alors des passions et des désirs conformes à l'état présent. Ce ne sont que les craintes que nous nous donnons nous-mêmes, et non pas la nature, qui nous troublent ; parce-qu'elles joignent à l'état où nous sommes les passions de l'état où nous ne sommes pas.'

"I should not have thought he had known enough of health to write the above. On the whole, his deficiencies seem to be those which arise from want of knowledge of a healthy state, and of sympathy with those who are well.

"Pray remember me kindly to Miss Harness, and believe me, very truly yours.

"HARRIET MARTINEAU."

CHAPTER VII.

ANECDOTES CONTINUED.—SHERIDAN.—ROGERS.—MRS. GORE.—AMERICAN FRIENDS.—THEODORE HOOK.—LYDIA WHITE.—VISIT TO IRELAND.—REMARKABLE DREAM.—MISCELLANEOUS REFERENCES.—CHRISTMAS STORIES.

Among the distinguished persons with whom Mr. Harness was acquainted, he not unfrequently met the celebrated Sheridan. He was present at some of the sumptuous entertainments with which the Dramatist regaled his friends, and remarked that, although his guests denounced his extravagance, they never refused his invitations. Sheridan was not devoid of that vanity which so often accompanies talent. On one occasion, at a Theatrical Fund Dinner, he made a very high-flown speech, in which he spoke of himself as being "descended from the loins of kings!" "That is quite true," said Dr. Spry, who was sitting next to Harness; "the last time I saw his father,* he was the King of Denmark."

* He was an actor.

Sheridan's solicitor found his client's wife one day walking up and down her drawing-room, apparently in a frantic state of mind. He inquired the cause of such violent perturbation. She only replied, "that her husband was a villain." On the man of business further interrogating her as to what had so suddenly awakened her to a sense of that fact, she at length answered, with some hesitation, "Why, I have discovered that all the love-letters he sent me were the very same as those which he sent to his first wife!'

The poet Rogers was a more intimate friend. He was one of those few instances in which talent is found united with wealth and energetic labour. In his literary work he was most persevering; so much so that he spent no less than seventeen years in writing and revising "The Pleasures of Memory." The hasty slip-shod style of the present day was not to his taste. Rogers, like Byron and his compeers, aimed at producing finished pieces; and though they sometimes thus confined their eagle-flight, they at least avoided an ignominious fall to the ground. But Rogers was not only a wealthy banker and rural poet; he had also a keen sense of humour, and there was something in the deadness of his countenance and the dryness of his manner which seemed to give additional point to his sarcasms. Mr. Harness said that many of his most telling hits

seemed to have little force, when related under different circumstances. Some, however, the reader will, as I imagine, be able to understand without any oral interpretation. Rogers' dwelling was "a cabinet of Art," and he kept a model bachelor's household; his servants consisting of three men and one woman. When one of the former, who had been a long time in his service, died, a kind-hearted friend called to condole with him on the loss he had sustained. "Well!" exclaimed Rogers, after listening for some time to his expressions of sympathy, "I don't know that I feel his loss so very much, after all. For the first seven years he was an obliging servant; for the second seven years an agreeable companion; but for the last seven he was a tyrannical master."*

Speaking of France brought him to the following story, to which he gave considerable effect:— "An Englishman and a Frenchman had to fight a duel. That they might have the better chance of missing one another, they were to fight in a dark room. The Englishman fired up the chimney, and, by Jove! he brought down the

* The poet seems to have been somewhat unfortunate in his servants. On one occasion when in the country, his favourite groom, with whom he used to drive every day, gave notice to leave. Rogers asked him why he was going, and what he had to complain of? "Nothing," replied the man; "but you *are* so dull in the buggy."

Frenchman! When I tell this story in Paris," observed Rogers, "I put the Englishman up the chimney!"

Mr. Harness had many other little interesting scraps about Rogers. The Poet greatly disliked writing letters of condolence, and when he had that melancholy duty to perform, he generally copied one of Cowper's. Lord Lansdowne once spoke to him in congratulatory terms about the marriage of a common friend. "I do not think it so desirable," observed Rogers. "No!" replied Lord Lansdowne, "why not? His friends approve of it!" "Happy man!" returned Rogers, "to satisfy all the world. His friends are pleased, *and his enemies are delighted!*"

Moore was a friend of Rogers, and also of Mr. Harness; but I seldom heard the latter speak of him, except with reference to Byron, and to his having asked for information and letters which might be of use in the "Life" he was compiling. Speaking of Moore's taste for biography, and the number of Memoirs he had composed, Rogers one day cynically observed,"—Why, it is not safe to die while Moore's alive!"

The following letter from Mrs. Charles Gore is interesting in connection with this subject:—

"Hamble Cliff, Friday.

"Dear Mr. Harness,

"Thanks a thousand times. Pray make no further inquiries about the books. You have told me all I want to know, in the names of the publishers. I had previously fancied that Hope's 'Essays' were suppressed, and I remember giving £10 for a suppressed 'English Bard.' *Apropos* to the latter work, having been here quite alone lately (even my daughter away, on a visit) I have been reading over Byron's Memoirs, and it made one melancholy to think that, of the galaxy therein glorified, only two were left—then the 'old boys' of the party: *i.e.*, Rogers and Moore. While moralizing over the fact, I suddenly started up with 'No! by Jove—there is William Harness (and younger than ever).' I afterwards recollected the Guiccioli (then a bride), and another William, best forgotten. Five and thirty years have certainly passed over you more lightly than over the rest.

"I am sorry I cannot persuade you to come and listen to the melancholy autumnal song of the robins and the screaming of the gulls. They would afford you texts without end; and I have a bit of sea-shore all to myself, with a pleasant seat beside it, where you might go and talk to the waves like little Dombey or King Canute—whose chair, by the way, was set up hard by the seat in question—for

we are close to Netley. Again, many thanks for your letter, and believe me,

"Faithfully yours,
"C. F. GORE."

Among the American friends of this literary coterie, Washington Irving may be mentioned, though he was scarcely to be called an American, inasmuch as his father was an Englishman, and his mother a Scotchwoman. He was often in this country, as his brother was a merchant in Liverpool; and when he visited London, he usually breakfasted with Mr. Harness, and dined with Rogers. Alluding to the vanity and self-appreciation of young America, not unnatural in a rising nation, Mr. Harness told me that a friend of his spoke in the following manner of a play he had lately written:—"I wrote a tragedy last winter—and a very good one it was; and my father said he wished to read it, and I allowed him; and *he* said it was a very good one. And he said he should like to go over it with me, word for word, and line for line; and we went over it word for word, and line for line; and he said he should like to show it to Washington Irving, and so he did; and *he* thought it was very good, and he said he should like to go over it with me word for word and line for line. And so we did, *and it was beautiful to*

observe the difference between that old man and me!"

In noticing the peculiar phraseology which has grown up in America, Mr. Harness said that, one day at dinner, Daniel Webster, in referring to Devonshire, in which he had been travelling, described its scenery in the concise words, "Clever country." Shortly afterwards he asked Mr. Harness whether he had heard Sydney Smith preach. He replied in the affirmative. "Handsome preacher," remarked Webster. Mr. Harness observed that the epithets might have been advantageously transposed.

Among Mr. Harness's friends and correspondents was Miss Sedgwick, the American authoress. It is said that she alludes to him in the following passage, though only an initial is given. (She came late to Loftus Lowndes' dinner party, thinking the invitation was for eight instead of seven.) "To my dismay," she writes, "and in spite of my protestations, Mrs. —— insisted on re-beginning at the alpha of the dinner; the guests had reached the omega. The soup was brought back. *H.* averred that it was most fortunate for him; he had been kept talking, and had not eaten half a dinner; so he started fresh with me and went *bonâ fide* through, covering me with his *ægis* as I ran my gauntlet through the courses. The age of chivalry is *not* past. Match this deed of courtesy, if you can, from

the lives of the *preux chevaliers*, taken from their sun-rising to their sun-setting!"

At Mrs. Siddons' receptions, Mr. Harness became acquainted with Theodore Hook, who was then in general request in fashionable and literary society. He was an accomplished musician, and almost as remarkable for his *improvisatore* talent as for his brilliance in repartee. Wherever he happened to be present, he was looked upon as the wag of the party, and his love of merriment sometimes caused him to indulge in pleasantries which, though sufficiently harmless in themselves, verged too closely upon the limits of propriety. One evening, Mr. Harness, who shared the prejudices then entertained about waltzing, observed to Theodore that he was glad to hear that he disapproved of the new dance. "Well, I don't know about that," returned his friend, "'tis a mere matter of feeling."

When Theodore was travelling along the south coast, he arrived in the course of his journey at Dover, and alighting at the Ship Hotel, changed his boots, ordered a slight dinner, and went out for a stroll through the town. Returning at the appointed time, he was surprised to find the whole establishment in confusion. A crowd had collected outside the door —the master of the house was standing at the foot of the stairs with two candles in his hands, and on Theodore's entrance, he walked backwards before

him, and conducted him into the principal saloon, where all the waiters were standing, and a magnificent repast had been provided. The wit was much amused at the dignity to which he had been promoted; but, being an easy-going fellow, made no scruples, and sitting down, did full justice to what was set before him. Next day he signified his intention of departing, and ordered a coach; when, to his astonishment, a carriage-and-four drove up to convey him to his destination. He inquired, with some apprehension, what he was to pay for all this grandeur, and was no less astonished than gratified on receiving the answer, "Nothing whatever, your Royal Highness." He was never more thoroughly mystified; but the next night, on taking off his boots, which he had bought ready made just before he went to Dover, he found "H.S.H. the Prince of Orange" written inside them. They had been originally made for the Prince, who was then in England, sueing for the hand of Princess Charlotte, and notice had been given that all his expenses while in the country should be set down to the charge of the Government.

Among those most celebrated for their hospitalities during Mr. Harness's earlier residence in London, was Miss Lydia White. She kept a 'menagerie,' and was herself not the least remarkable specimen it contained. Brave in paint and plaster—

a wonderful work of art—she underwent all the labour necessary to produce the grand effect, not from any vanity or affectation, but from motives of pure benevolence. "Were I," she observed, "to present myself, as I naturally am, without any of these artificial adornments, instead of being a source of pleasure, and perhaps amusement, to my friends, I should plunge them into the profoundest melancholy." This considerate lady was not only fond of clever conversation, but sometimes herself joined in the tournament of wit. Mr. Harness remembered many sallies of playful nonsense which he had heard from her; one of those he preserved was the following:—On the return of Charles X. to Paris, Talma was engaged to play 'Sylla;' but he looked so much like Napoleon, that he was ordered to put on a curly wig. "Why," said Lydia, "were he to do that, we should hardly know Scylla from Charybdis."

On another occasion, at one of her small and most agreeable dinners in Park Street, the company (most of them, except the hostess, being Whigs) were discussing, in rather a querulous strain, the desperate prospects of their party. "Yes," said Sydney Smith, "we are in a deplorable condition; we must do something to help ourselves; I think we had better sacrifice a Tory Virgin." This was partially addressed to Lydia White, who at once

catching and applying the allusion to Iphigenia, answered, "Well, I believe there is nothing the Whigs would not do *to raise the wind!*"

Among Mr. Harness's more intimate friends, the name of Henry Hope should not be omitted. This celebrated millionaire, the author of "Anastasius," and the unfortunate hero in the picture of "Beauty and the Beast," was unremitting in his kindness and hospitality towards the young clergyman. He frequently invited him to stay at the Deep Dene, and here Mr. Harness found himself surrounded by all the talent and wealth of England. The tone of the conversation sometimes amused him much; as when Rothschild observed to Hope that a man must be a "a poor scoundrel who could not afford to lose two millions;" or replied to a nobleman who said he must be a supremely happy man, "I happy! when only this morning I received a letter from a man to say that, if I did not send him £500, he would blow out my brains!"* Mr. Hope had a tutor for his sons at the Deep Dene. One day, when Mr. Harness was staying there, he found this gentleman pacing up and down the room in the most distressing agitation of mind. "Is there any-

* The demands made upon the great are certainly most extraordinary. I remember the late Archbishop Sumner telling me that a man wrote to him to send him immediately £500, as it would save him from "some unpleasant complications." It was to be directed to X. Y. Z., Post Office, Bristol.

thing the matter?" inquired Mr. Harness, anxiously. "The matter!" he replied, "I should think there was! Three of the worst things that can possibly happen to a man: I'm in love—I'm in debt—and I've doubts about the doctrine of the Trinity!"

Mr. Hope died in 1831. The night after his death Mr. Harness dreamed that he saw Lord Beresford's country residence in an unusual state of commotion. He woke up with the impression that some death or other great calamity had happened there; and though he afterwards thought lightly of the matter, he determined, as he was going in that direction, to call at Lord Beresford's in Duchess Street, on his way home. On arriving there, he found the blinds down, and the house shut up; and upon inquiring, the gate-porter told him that Mr. Thomas Hope had died the day before at Bedgebury Park. Mr. Harness had not known that his friend was either ill or in England. Mr. Hope left Mr. Harness his literary executor.

The friendship which had subsisted between Mr. Harness and the father was continued with the son, and he was a frequent guest at the Deep Dene, and at Castle Blaney, in Ireland, after it had been purchased by Mr. Hope. During these visits he sometimes extended his journey, and spoke admiringly, and with an artist's taste, of the beauty of the country, and of the violet eyes and dark hair which in

some places characterized the peasantry. He generally crossed by Holyhead, but on one occasion he took the longer sea-passage by Bristol, and on the voyage made acquaintance with a Roman Catholic Priest. He said that this Irish ecclesiastic seemed one of the most finished gentlemen he had ever met with, and he thought himself highly fortunate when, on landing, he offered to accompany him and show the lions of the good city of Cork. They walked through the town arm-in-arm, Mr. Harness and the Priest, the latter treading the streets with a majestic step and lofty mien, which approached almost to sublimity when the people bowed down before him, counted their beads and besought his blessing. At length, having made the round of the town, and visited Father Mathew's statue, and the principal buildings, "And now, sir," said the Priest, "perhaps you would like to see 'the Beggars' Market;' and, indeed, I have a little business to do there myself." Mr. Harness assented, and he led the way to a place where there seemed to be every sort of thing which nobody could possibly want. Rusty hinges, broken keys, and old coffins formed a considerable part of the miscellaneous collection. The Priest's business was, it appeared, to buy some second-hand soda-water bottles, which he intended to fill with 'cherry-bounce.' He presently found out an old woman who had such

articles for sale, and he accordingly began to bargain with her for them. But, good Heavens! what a transformation! His elegant manners and lofty bearing disappeared as if by magic; his voice became loud and menacing, his countenance dark and ferocious. His gesticulations as he continued became still more alarming, and the vileness and profanity of his language quite took his companion's breath away. When by these means he had accomplished his end—the cheapening of a dozen bottles from tenpence to sevenpence—he resumed his wonted tranquillity; and, thrusting his arm through that of Mr. Harness, walked away as majestically as if nothing had occurred.

Alluding to the strange coincidence above mentioned, in the case of Mr. Hope's death, and to other remarkable dreams, Mr. Harness related that a lady friend of his, when about to return with her husband from India, prayed him to reconsider his determination, as she had dreamed that she was drowned, and that, as she was dying, she saw a white cloud passing over her. He laughed at her fears, and represented to her how absurd it would appear to their friends to say they had determined to remain in India because she had had the nightmare on the eve of their departure. They accordingly sailed as they had arranged and reached Alexandria in safety. "What do you think of your dream now?" inquired

her husband. "We are not yet in London," she replied doubtfully. They soon arrived safely in Paris. "We are not far from London now," he observed jocosely. "But we are not yet there," she persisted. They crossed to Dover, and were proceeding by rail to town, when the well-known accident occurred to the train at Staplehurst; the carriages were overturned into the water; the lady was drowned, and the white steam of the engine was blown across her like a cloud.

It was through Miss Mitford's introduction that Mr. Harness became intimate with Serjeant Talfourd. He had been a Reading boy—a pupil of Dr. Valpy's—and the authoress felt an admiration for his talents even greater than that she entertained for everything else of worth which emanated from her "Belford Regis." He was one of those many *protégés* for whom she predicted a successful career; and when, in after-years, her prophecy had proved true, she often stayed on a visit at his house in London. One of these occasions was shortly after the production and favourable reception of the Serjeant's well-known play of "Ion." Miss Mitford was also herself at the zenith of her fame. "Rienzi" had run for fifty nights at Drury Lane; and the attention she received, and the crowds of visitors she attracted, kindled a flame of jealousy in the breast of the rival author. Some

complaints of his unreasonable conduct towards her may be found in her letters at this period. It was, perhaps, natural that a man who had just written a successful play should feel a little proud of his bantling; but the Serjeant seems, in this respect, to have altogether exceeded the bounds of moderation. One morning at breakfast, during Miss Mitford's visit, he opened a newspaper and came upon a review depreciating his beloved play. This brought matters to a crisis. He loudly inveighed against the injustice of the critic; and on Miss Mitford's endeavouring to pacify him, by remarking that it was really not so severe, and that she should not have felt so much had the strictures been made on her "Rienzi," "Your 'Rienzi,' indeed!" replied the Serjeant contemptuously; "I dare say not! That is very different!" I have even heard it stated that the dissension on this subject became so unpleasant that Miss Mitford packed up her boxes one morning and drove away to Mr. Harness's. The Serjeant may, perhaps, be pardoned, for his affection for "Ion" was deep and constant. On one occasion, when Dickens was calling on Rogers at Broadstairs, he observed, "We shall have Talfourd here to-night." "Shall we?" returned the Poet; "I am rejoiced to hear it. I hope he will come and dine; but how do you know he is coming?" "Because 'Ion' is to be acted at Margate,

and he is never absent from any of its representations."

There was as much careless freedom in Talfourd's household as in that of most men of genius. Goldsmith himself could not have desired a more entire absence of conventionality. One day, when Mr. Harness was dining at their house in company with several judges, the Serjeant and Mrs. Talfourd sat throughout dinner each with a cat in their lap. On another occasion, Mrs. Talfourd requested him to carve a chicken which was placed before him. He essayed to comply, but on his making the attempt the bird spun round and shot off the dish. Mr. Harness, who was a little timid in society, was much perturbed by this misadventure; but on examining the cause of it, he found that he had been given a fork with only one prong! "Will you be so good as to cut that tart before you," said the hostess to another guest. "Certainly, if you desire it," was the reply; "but perhaps you are not aware that it has not been in the oven?"

Dickens was a very kind friend to Mr. Harness; he regarded him as one of the literary men of the past, and occasionally asked his opinion, and sent him little presents, which were of course very gratifying. Mr. Harness thoroughly appreciated the great novelist and his works, and was supremely happy whenever he could persuade 'Charles' to be a guest

at his table. When Dickens was giving Readings in his later years, he told Mr. Harness that he would always have a chair placed for him close to the platform; but Mr. Harness never accepted the kind offer, although he attended all his Recitations; and on those appointed nights it was impossible to persuade him to accept any invitation. Notes frequently passed between them, but they were short and unimportant, though always neatly worded. The following will serve as a specimen :—

"My dear Harness,

"Will Miss Harness and you come and dine with us, at the Star and Garter at Richmond, on Monday the 26th at a quarter past six? Besides ourselves there will be only A. Townshend and a young bride, a friend of ours, who from being a quiet clergyman's daughter in the Isle of Wight has suddenly expanded (like a girl in a Fairy Tale) into fifty thousand a year and a castle,

"Affectionately yours always,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

Dickens was too fully engaged to write long letters, even had he not been a man of too active a character to spend his time in that way. Mr. Harness, alluding to his industry and talent, remarks that "when Hume complained that his

speeches were not faithfully reported in the 'Times,' the Editor put on Dickens, who was then a reporter, and the dissatisfied member very soon cried, "*Peccavi.*"

The name of Dickens brings us to that of his great contemporary, Thackeray; with regard to whom Mr. Harness appeared to entertain some prejudice. He thought his Bohemianism and the general tone of his writings exercised an injurious influence on the rising generation. His first personal experience of the novelist was certainly not calculated to remove this impression. Thackeray invited him to dinner, and Mr. Harness accepted with delight, promising himself a rich intellectual feast at the house of a man of such literary reputation. He was gratified in one respect, for when he arrived he found learning and talent most ably represented. The party at dinner was large, and while the ladies remained the conversation wandered softly among flowers and wine and airy compliments. At length the movement came—the flutter of fans and silks—and the gay *cortége* of youth and beauty made its way to the upper world. The light element had now passed away; the hour had arrived; and Mr. Harness looked forward to such a discussion as should surpass the days of yore. Now was the time for sharp repartee and for the settling of accounts between rival wits—for the cut and thrust and skilful

parry. He settled himself in his chair, prepared to take his part if necessary, and kept his eyes and ears open, so as not to lose a single word or gesture. "Do you smoke?" inquired the host. "Smoke?" Mr. Harness had never been guilty of such an offence against social morality. In his day, tars and bargemen were the only smokers—except Dr. Parr—and he retained all the old prejudices against such an imitation of chimney-pots. He would as soon have thought of going to carouse at a public-house as of smoking in the dining-room after dinner. "Smoke, Sir? I do not." But his firm refusal had no effect whatever on the epicurean company by which he was surrounded. Cigars and tobacco were placed upon the table; punch and negus followed; and the observations which were made during the rest of the sitting consisted only of such instructive remarks as "Pass the box," and "Fill up!"

Another literary man, whom Mr. Harness constantly met, but who has derived most of his renown from his Diary, was Crabb Robinson. Mr. H. said that he was one of the few men who, having worked to obtain a competence for literary leisure, did actually, when the time arrived, retire from public life and remunerative employment. Crabb Robinson often mentions his friend in an incidental way in his Diary. In one place we

read, "The first time I dined with Harness was in 1839, and I met Babbage. He has written some elegant poems. He was, and is a man of taste—of High Church principles, and liberal in spirit. Among our common friends were John L. Kenyon and Miss Burdett Coutts." He made a mistake in calling Mr. Harness a High Churchman, for he always wished to keep things in the "old way," to which he had been accustomed in his youth. He said that Crabb Robinson was a great talker, but often drifted about from one subject to another in a most disconnected manner.

Many eminent men might be enumerated among Mr. Harness's clerical friends and acquaintances. He often spoke with admiration of Dr. Phillpotts, the celebrated nonagenarian Bishop of Exeter. The Bishop was remarkable, not only for erudition, but for that social tact and elegance which rarely accompanies it. One day his lawyers were dining with him, and he wished his wife to retire from the table early, that he might discuss with them his course of action in one of those unfortunate suits in which he was so constantly involved. The lady, however, found the legal gentlemen agreeable, and notwithstanding repeated nods, and winks, and hints from her lord, remained immoveable in her place. At length she understood his meaning, and rose hurriedly to depart. "What! so *soon*, my love?"

demanded the Bishop, blandly, as he opened the door for her with an obsequious bow.

Lady Morley told Dr. Phillpotts she was going to leave Torquay sooner than she had intended. The Bishop inquired what cause was to deprive them of the pleasure of her company. "I am going for advice about my eyes," she replied; "they give me constant pain." "Well, Madam," he returned, "it is perhaps only fair that eyes which have done so much execution, should in turn suffer something themselves."

Dr. Milman, who was for a long period Vicar of Reading, before he became Dean of St. Paul's, was one of Mr. Harness's and Miss Mitford's earliest friends. Speaking of his celebrated poem, Mr. Harness observed that one day he found Mr. Murray in an unusual state of disquietude and indignation. "Would you believe it," demanded the publisher, "Milman has written to ask me for an additional sum for the second edition of the 'Fall of Jerusalem?' Why, it was I who made that poem." "You?" repeated Mr. Harness, in much astonishment; for although Mr. Murray was an excellent man of business, he could never have been accused of being in the least degree poetical—"you made the 'Fall of Jerusalem?'" "Yes," maintained the publisher, stoutly. "I should like to know what that poem would have been if I had not brought it

out in an octavo form?" Mr. Murray sent the MS. of "Philip van Artevelde" to Milman and Harness for their opinions as to its prospects of success. Both, strange to say, were unfavourable to it. Mr. Harness said he never knew a book look so different in print from what it did in manuscript. There was to the last much sympathy and intercourse between these remarkable brother-clergymen. Mr. Harness said that the unfortunate weakness of the spine from which his friend suffered, was inherited; but that when young, he was an athletic man, a good oarsman and cricketer.

Dr. Selwyn, the late Bishop of New Zealand, mentioned to Mr. Harness that on asking an old Maori what he thought of the English colonists, the reply was, "Well, first come the little flies, and then the big flies. We are the little flies, and you are the big ones who are to succeed us." He said the natives were an intelligent but idle race.

On our conversation turning one day upon the fact that clergymen generally were destined to witness but small results from their labours, Mr. Harness remarked that allusion had been made to the same subject previously when he was visiting a prison chaplain. Mr. Harness asked him whether his ministry had been attended with success. "With very little, I grieve to say," was the reply. "A short time since I thought I had brought to a better

state of mind a man who had attempted to murder a woman and had been condemned to death. He showed great signs of contrition after the sentence was passed upon him, and I thought I could observe the dawnings of grace upon his soul. I gave him a Bible, and he was most assiduous in the study of it, frequently quoting passages from it which he said convinced him of the heinousness of his offence. The man gave altogether such a promise of reformation, and of a change of heart and life, that I exerted myself to the utmost, and obtained for him such a commutation of his sentence as would enable him soon to begin the world again, and as I hoped with a happier result. I called to inform him of my success. His gratitude knew no bounds; he said I was his preserver, his deliverer. 'And here,' he added, as he grasped my hand in parting, 'here is your Bible. I may as well return it to you, *for I hope that I shall never want it again.*' "

The following humourous allusions occurred in Mr. Harness's conversations with me, and although they are trifling in their nature, may not form an unpleasant conclusion to this chapter.

A country Rector, coming up to preach at Oxford in his turn, complained to Dr. Routh, the venerable Principal of Maudlin, that the remuneration was very inadequate, considering the travelling expenses, and the labour necessary for the composi-

tion of the discourse. "How much did they give you?" inquired Dr. Routh. "Only five pounds," was the reply. "Only five pounds?" repeated the Doctor. "Why, I would not have preached that sermon for fifty."

When Lawrence (the Doctor) received so many black balls at the Athenæum, every one said, "Think of the Clergy being so ill-natured!" It was found that only two blackballs came from clergymen, and eleven from doctors!

At a dinner party a somewhat dull couple, who affected literature, informed their friend that they were going to visit the city of Minerva. Mr. Harness, who happened to be sitting next to the humorous Jekyll, heard him mutter to himself, "To the Greeks—foolishness."

The Bishop of Derry was disputing with a Roman Catholic Priest about Purgatory. "Well, my Lord," replied the Priest in conclusion, "you may go further and fare worse."

Jones, the tailor, was asked by a customer who thought much of his cut, to go down and have some shooting with him in the country. Among the party was the Duke of Northumberland. "Well, Mr. Jones," observed his Grace, "I'm glad to see that you are becoming a sportsman. What sort of gun do you shoot with?" "Oh, with a double-breasted one, your Grace," was the reply.

Speaking of Brummell, Mr. Harness remarked that many of the dandies of his time were men of wit, and not mere clothes-horses. He remembered a party standing to admire a sunset where the orb of day was departing in a golden glory. "Does it very well, doesn't he?" observed Brummell. On another occasion Brummell was walking with a friend past the newly erected bronze statue in Hanover Square. "Well," said his friend, "I never thought Pitt had been so tall a man." "Nor so green a one," added Brummell. Belvoir Castle was at that time very famous for its hospitalities. So large was the number of invitations that people used to come and go almost without the knowledge of the Duke. When one set had left, another succeeded as a matter of course, without waiting for any formal invitation. Brummell was among those who enjoyed these privileges. On one occasion a friend went down to Belvoir, and as usual applied for an apartment. "There are none vacant," replied the housekeeper. "None vacant!" returned the dismayed visitor; "how can that be! I know that Mr. Brummell came up to town yesterday." "Yes, Sir," replied the lady, "*but he took the key along with him.*"

Speaking of Mr. Lowe's speeches, Mr. Harness remarked that nothing so chastened the taste as the study of the classics; not even that of Shakespeare.

He also observed that humour was in the mind, and had nothing to do with the animal spirits. Charles Mathews, Liston, and Leach were all given to despondency. The story about the Doctor recommending Grimaldi to go and hear himself really referred to an actor in Italy.

Having consorted with so many of the most brilliant wits for half a century, Mr. Harness had heard so many racy sayings, that it was difficult to produce any *jeu d'esprit* which seemed to him really original. On one occasion (when he had been dining in company with the Bishop of Oxford and Mr. Gladstone) I inquired how he enjoyed his privilege, and what was the character of the intellectual banquet? 'Well," he replied, "after dinner the gentlemen began to relate anecdotes, and to say the truth I don't think I ever heard so many stale 'Joe Millers' in my life."

One December, when I was about to leave for the country, he told me the following stories with which I might amuse my friends round the Christmas hearth. They are interesting as being supported by a stronger amount of evidence than such accounts usually possess.

On one occasion, in the time of our grandfathers, a hundred and fifty years ago, the mansion of Lord Townshend at Rainham, was so full, that the rooms in ordinary use were not sufficient to accommodate

the guests. To solve this difficulty, it was proposed to place one of the visitors in a chamber which was generally supposed to be haunted by a white female figure. It was late at night when Lord Townshend conducted his friend to his apartment, and the consternation of both may be imagined when, on opening the door, they perceived something white and tall, like a female in a long robe, gliding across, and disappearing through a panel opposite. Next day Lord Townshend examined the wainscoting, and observing a slight peculiarity in the panel, ordered it to be removed. Behind it a kind of niche was discovered, containing a human skeleton. It was now learnt, from some of the oldest inhabitants in the neighbourhood, that the white apparition had formerly been considered to be connected with a Lady Townshend about whose death there had been something dark and mysterious. Lord Townshend ordered the coffin, in which she was supposed to have been buried, to be brought up from the vault, and a strange confirmation was given to the ancient rumour, when, on its being opened, it was found to be empty.

Lord Glenelg's father told Mr. Harness that once when his son was staying at a country house, and the party were assembled at the breakfast table, he observed from the window a lady—who was to have left that morning—crossing the lawn. On making

inquiries, it was found that the lady in question had left the house, and it subsequently transpired that an accident had occurred in which she had lost her life, at the very time when she appeared to be passing before the windows.

Dr. Baring, when Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, rented for a short period a house which had belonged to Sir J. Paul, the grandfather of the present Baronet. Miss —— was soon afterwards staying with him as a visitor. One night, on putting out her candle and lying down in bed, she beheld, to her astonishment and alarm, a little old man sitting in the arm-chair, warming his hands over the fire. Her first impulse was to call for help; but she restrained herself, and, the figure continuing motionless, she at length fell asleep. In the morning she related what she had seen, and from the description she gave of the old gentleman, one of the party at once recognized him as the deceased baronet to whom the house had previously belonged.

A vessel was sailing in the Atlantic, when the mate, on looking into the captain's cabin, saw a stranger sitting at the writing-desk. A sentence was afterwards found written there: "Steer to the north-west." The captain supposed it must have been written by one of the crew, but none of their handwritings in the least resembled that found in

the cabin. After some consultation, the captain changed his course and stood for the north-west. When they had sailed a considerable distance, they came in sight of an ice-bound vessel. "There" cried the mate, as soon as they went aboard her, "there is the man I saw writing in the cabin!" He was one of the sailors, and had been asleep at the time stated.

CHAPTER VIII.

POLITICS.—BENEFITS OF SETTLED GOVERNMENT TO RICH AND POOR.—POLITICAL ALLUSIONS UNSUITABLE IN THE PULPIT.—NECESSARY EXCEPTIONS.—CONDUCT OF THE GOVERNMENT IN INDIA.—ABSENCE OF RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE IN THE COUNCILS OF THE NATION.—STATE AID.—REFINEMENT NOT NECESSARILY CONDUCIVE TO MORALITY.—OBJECTIONS TO UNSECTARIAN EDUCATION.

It will be unnecessary to inform the reader who has perused the foregoing chapters that Mr. Harness was, in every sense, a clergyman of the old school. He took a pride in being so, and as he advanced in life his character became more marked in this respect. It must be remembered that he had lived in times widely different from the present, and had known the day when he incurred the charge of affectation for not powdering his hair like his brother clergymen. He was then regarded as somewhat in advance of his age; but he still retained a great suspicion of novelties, and was doubtful whether changes would be found generally advantageous. His deportment was in every respect in unison with his sentiments. No one could be in his

company without observing the neatness of his attire, the precision of his language, and the studious politeness of his manner. He was an admirable specimen of the past age, and deplored the careless dress, the 'fast' conversation, and the broad opinions of the rising generation. "There seems to be some truth," he would say, "in what I have heard among my contemporaries, that there are no gentlemen like the old gentlemen." In politics, Mr. Harness belonged to the old 'Church and King' school—a staunch conservative; but if not professedly 'liberal' in principle he was always practically generous; and that he held enlightened views may be inferred from the following passages:—

"The Gospel naturally directs to equal rule and liberal government. It opposes a permanent resistance to every species of tyranny and injustice; it operates with a steady, even, and continued agency for the amelioration of the condition of mankind. It is the good seed which the Lord has sown; and it will inevitably arise in majesty and spread its protecting branches over us, if, with faith in the wisdom and devout reliance on the Providence of God, we will allow it to grow up and flourish beneath the genial influence of Heaven, and not destroy the promise of its blossoms by endeavours to anticipate the fruit."

"Savage and barbarous life is not an unmixed

evil; civil and orderly life is not an unmixed good. And it most unfortunately happens that the evils of civil and orderly life always seem to bear, with the full oppression of their weight, on that most numerous class among whom its good is least immediately perceptible. The benefits which result from the existence of an established government, and from the due subordination of the different classes of society, are very distinctly seen by those who enjoy (under such a state of things) the security of their property, and the possession of all the luxuries and comforts which such security affords. But the wisdom of such a system is by no means so self-evident to the humbler and poorer many. The meditative mind, indeed, may trace its kindly influence from the heart to the extremities of society, and discover that, as there is no part uncherished by the support which it diffuses, neither is there any part (however abject or remote) that would not be injured by its abolition. This is a truth—but it is an obscure truth. The good which the poor and labouring class derive from the institutions of civil life approaches them by such circuitous and complicated channels that none but an educated eye can follow it through all its windings, and track it upwards to its source. Doubtless, the poor would be sufferers from the miseries of anarchy; doubtless, they have a vital interest in the security of govern-

ment and the inviolability of the laws; but the portion of that general benefit which descends to them appears so small, in comparison with that which is afforded their superiors, and sheds so cold a comfort around their destitute and narrow homes, that they may well be pardoned if they sometimes fail to perceive in what manner their welfare can be connected with the orderly and tranquil subsistence of institutions which secure to their masters the enjoyment of ease, wealth, and power, and seem to leave nothing for them but an unwelcome residue of indigence, labour, and privations."

"Exactly in proportion as property is secure, civilization advances: exactly in proportion as property is insecure, civilization declines. 'Righteousness,' says Solomon, 'exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." As governments are oppressive, as laws are partially administered, as the dealings between man and man become more mingled with falsehood or attainted by fraud, as rapine and violence are allowed to escape unpunished—the fair fruits of art and science, of sound learning and liberal opinion, of gentle manners and mild affections, perish gradually away, and give place to all the evil progeny which are engendered of malignant passions, narrow-minded bigotry, and all-grasping selfishness."

Mr. Harness very seldom touched upon politics in

his public ministry; he wished to remove as far as possible all party feeling from the worship of God. Alluding to his conduct in this respect, he observes: "I have purposely avoided all allusion to subjects of a mere temporal nature. The passing interests of the day—the dissensions of politicians—the occurrences which engage and disturb society, have found no reverberating echoes here. My desire has been that when we were met together for our brief Sabbath hour, that hour should be one of calm and peace, shedding over the soul the purifying rest of Sabbath feelings; an hour snatched from the ordinary cares, thoughts, and business of the world, and saved from the turmoil of those factions and feuds, competitions and enmities, which tumultuously rage without the wall of this 'house of prayer,' like the angry waves of the deluge about the Ark. On the same principle, we have never perplexed ourselves, here, with the disputes of the religious parties of the day. Without ever shrinking from the full and distinct avowal of my own views, which, I trust, are alike supported by the authority of Scripture and the Church, I have abstained from disturbing your minds with the discussion of the views of those who differ from us. I have studiously avoided stimulating your animosities against any class of your brother Christians, either by denunciations of the Roman Catholics, or attacks on the Calvinists, or

anathemas against the Tractarians. I have shunned such topics, because they tend to produce malignity, and not charity; because the preaching against others is virtually an exalting of ourselves, and I know whom it is the Lord delighteth to abase; because every error of opinion among the disciples of the Gospel is combined with a certain degree of truth derived from the Gospel, and it requires far greater nicety of discrimination than the brief and hasty notices of the pulpit will allow to escape the danger of treading down the wheat of truth, while attempting to eradicate the tares of error; and because every year I live, my conviction becomes stronger that 'piety never begins till controversy ends.' My only object has been to concentrate your attention on the great essential doctrines of Christianity, and so to bring them to bear on your consciences as to secure their practical influence on your duty towards God and man. Apart from all exciting arguments—all declamatory appeals to the passions—all startling paradoxes which are gradually resolved by the alchemy of rhetoric into axiomatic truths—all subtle theological disquisitions—and all ingenious and novel but very questionable interpretations of Scripture, I have been content to tread the level ground offered by the common themes of pastoral instruction, without regarding the imputation of being considered common-place; for I have

always felt that my office here is not to teach divinity, as a science, to the learned few, but religion to the ignorant many, as presenting the highest objects of human hopes, and the noblest and purest motives of human conduct."

But there were occasions on which he deemed it culpable that a Minister of the Gospel should hold his peace. Under such pressure he felt it his duty to express his opinion in firm and uncompromising terms, and boldly condemned the temporizing policy of expediency.

"Either the information flowing in upon us day by day, and from different quarters, must be subject to a strange perversion, or there are delinquencies attaching to the Indian Government and to the English sojourners in India, which alone may be accounted as sufficient to invite the wrath of the Almighty against them; delinquencies, not only of such a description as could never have occurred, had the great body of our countrymen in the East been duly sensible of the responsibility of their position as Christian men among heathen people, but such as were sure, according to those ordinary counsels of Divine Providence which are revealed to us in the Bible, to expose and lay them bare to the wrath of God. I refer to no mere temporal transactions; I ignore all allusion to their civil oppressions—their heavy exactions—their deadly opium trade—their

grasping avarice—their questionable annexations; I speak simply of their conduct as members of the Church of Christ, and with reference to the Gospel of Christ. Has their influence been righteously employed for the diminution of Heathenism among the people? Has it not been employed in a contrary direction? And has not Idolatry of the grossest description been sustained, in decided opposition to God's commandments, by the fostering smiles and cheering patronage of the authorities? It is one thing to abstain from attacking a false religion with violence, and another to pay homage to it; but unless the information of competent authorities deceives us, we have, by our conduct, been inducing the belief that religious error and religious truth are matters of indifference—that Idolatry is no vain thing—and that we, who are worshippers of Jehovah, may, at any time, and with impunity, be allowed to mingle our devotions with the votaries of Baal and Moloch."

Again, with reference to our Home legislation, he observes:—

"Look to the great councils of the nation! What is the operation of faith there? Where do you find among the members who form them the pure, the righteous, the holy principles of the Gospel referred to, with the view of discovering what God's Word really does direct, that that

Word may be taken as their guide, and strictly followed out in their acts of legislation? No. It is cited as if they believed in it; a courteous obeisance of respect is made to it in passing; but passed by it is; and while they acknowledge its divine authority with their lips, they repudiate its divine authority by their practice. I would cite, in proof of this statement, the bent of modern legislation to relax the restraints which our Christian forefathers have placed upon the passions, as evinced in the Divorce Bill, and in the repeated attempts to authorize a man's marriage with his wife's sister. In the first of these bills, the legislation is directly opposed to God's Word; in the second, it is, to say the least, but little accordant with the the spirit of God's law. Christian faith, if it really and influentially possessed the hearts of our legislators, would direct them to an opposite course. It would prompt them to strengthen, and not to weaken, the marriage tie—to extend, and not to contract, the circle of pure affections about the hearth."

Directing his views by the light of God's Word alone, he alternately reprobated the irreligious conduct both of rulers and people. Some good remarks on the fluctuations of public opinion are contained in the following passage:

"If it were allowed us to form our notions of

the Divine Government from what we see going on in the world around us, we might be led to believe that any course of conduct, however vicious, if followed by the majority of a nation, must necessarily pass unpunished. As far as this world is concerned we know that all things are ultimately governed by opinion — that the opinion which governs is the opinion of the many—that the opinion of the many, like every other earthly thing, is liable to incessant mutation—that if, in one age, Religion and Virtue be sustained by the suffrages of the people, in another, ungodliness and vice may, under the same powerful auspices, become ascendant—and that when evil, sanctioned by the sentiments and habits of the multitude, thus stands omnipotent in the support of public opinion, any human monarch who might attempt to restrain it by laws or subject it to penalties, would as much exert himself in vain as if he tried to control the violence of the winds or to regulate the rush and swell of the ocean.

"But is such the case with the Government of God? Is His authority liable to be controlled or swayed by any such external influences? Can the fluctuations of human opinion affect the measures of His dominion? No. The most mighty Lord of Heaven and Earth holds in His own wisdom the certain invariable principles of moral good and evil.

And, in accordance with those principles, the reward and punishment of His justice will inevitably be determined. All other things may change; God is immutable."

From a due appreciation of the weakness and instability of human nature, Mr. Harness considered it of importance that the Church should be supported by the State:*

"Although State aid was necessary, in the dark days of barbarism, it is presumed that no such help is required in our present times of light and civilization—that Christianity may now be safely left to find its level without the superintending care of Government—and that, as with every other essentials to the welfare of human life, the want would create the demand, and the demand would secure the supply. Nothing can be more erroneous than such a supposition. It is founded on a fallacy altogether. There is not only no analogy between the cases; but, as Dr. Chalmers admirably demonstrated in his evidence before the Irish Committee, there is the most direct opposition between them. With regard

* In late years, speaking of the Bill for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, he observed how great were the disadvantages of the Voluntary system. A clergyman under it must preach what the people wish to hear. "A Dissenting congregation," he added, "lately dismissed their minister, on the ground that no man could make a living if he acted on the principles which he advocated!"

to all other things that are necessary to our happiness, the demand *increases* in proportion to the want, and consequently the supply may be safely entrusted to the operation of ordinary causes, without requiring the interference of the legislator to stimulate or assist their action; but with Religion, on the contrary, the demand always *diminishes* in proportion to the want, and the greater the state of spiritual destitution, the greater need there is for the interposition of some extraordinary means to induce the apprehension of it.

On the subject of Education, Mr. Harness did not take such wide views as are in favour at the present day. He was entirely opposed to those visionary theorists who think that all classes should receive instruction in the higher branches of literature and science. "People," he said "should be educated according to their station;" and reading, writing, and arithmetic were all that he considered necessary for the National Schools, with the exception of religious training, and such instruction in industrial work as might be of use to the children in after-life. "I cannot help thinking that such instruction is sufficient. I cannot perceive the wisdom of attempting to teach more. It is certainly just and right—kind to the individual and advantageous to the public—that every man endowed with extraordinary talents, such as Sir Richard

Arkwright or Professor Lee, should, however humble his condition, be afforded the educational means of raising himself above it. To effect this, if he be imbued with sound Christian principles as his guide, reading and writing—the ability of collecting the ideas of others and imparting his own—are quite enough; while, with regard to the great mass of the population, which must always consist of persons endowed with ordinary talents, it is a subject of grave doubt whether a wider range of instruction should be provided for them by public or charitable sources. Education above a man's condition, implies wants above his wages; and when those wants exist without the natural capacity which may be required to raise his condition to their level, they only too frequently become the origin of a painful but ineffective hankering after something better—a restless impatience of labour—an undefined sense of injury, and a resentful feeling of envy against all persons of a superior position.

"But crime, misery, and drunkenness are on the increase;' and it is presumed that ignorance lies at the root of all this evil. Ignorance of what? If it be said, virtual ignorance of the faith, then we are agreed. That sort of ignorance does lie at the root of all this evil. But if it be asserted that the moral mischief follows as the consequence of ignorance of secular knowledge, the proposition is refuted by

the facts which are, day by day, taking place before our eyes. Are the fraudulent offences, of which we have lately witnessed such oft-recurring and ingenious instances, to be attributed to ignorance in secular knowledge? Does the licentiousness by which so many fair-looking streets of the Metropolis are rendered disreputable, emanate from ignorance in secular knowledge? There is undoubtedly a class of violent crimes and an immense amount of misery which ensue from drunkenness; and that may be a reason why the drunkard should be rigorously punished; but I have yet to learn that the great mass of drunkards have become the degraded things they are, on account of their being less well-informed than others of their own rank. On the contrary, as far as my own experience of the class will enable me to judge, they would appear to be chiefly composed of persons who are somewhat better educated than the poor generally are—who have a taste for the conversation, the music, the gaming, the politics, the conviviality of the tavern—who from the force of such allurements have been led to neglect their business, till they were alike bankrupt of capital and character—and who, having once given way to dissolute habits, have gravitated from lower and lower, to the lowest depths of wretchedness, under the depressing weight of their vices."

"But it has been assumed that all such characters must of necessity be ignorant, and that if they had possessed some branch of knowledge to occupy their minds, they would never have fallen into such a state of degradation. 'Impart to them,' it is said, 'the rudiments of Science and Art in childhood, and provide for them the means of intellectual amusement in their manhood, and they will be drawn away by such attractions from the present haunts of their drunkenness and gaming and impurity.' Will they? Do we find this to be the case among the dissolute of our own station? Are they only lost in sin because they have not an ear for music or an eye for colour? Are they only fraudulent and licentious because they have not been so deeply imbued with secular learning as their compeers? Is it a property of our nature to extinguish the stronger excitement by the weaker? No; depend upon it, the scientific lecture, the reading-room, will avail nothing in effecting the reformation of that vicious portion of society for whom their attractions are prepared."

Mr. Harness thought that the advantages to be derived from intellectual endowments were erroneously estimated. "Nothing," he says, "is so common as to hear persons dilate in society on the humanizing influences of painting and statuary, of music and poetry, and recommend the encourage-

ment of a taste for these things as a means of elevating and refining the public mind. But by what intelligible process is this effected? In what manner do they act upon each other? It is possible—and I think it is so—that persons born with that peculiar temperament which is called genius, and by which they are rendered easily impressible by works of Art, appear to be distinguished above their fellows by a rare tenderness and instinctive delicacy of nature. It is a perilous gift to them. Their sensibility to pain is more than an equivalent to their susceptibility of pleasure; and we may fairly doubt whether the few by whom it is possessed ought to be allowed more than a very limited indulgence of their taste for the things that they delight in. Its gratification only serves to soften a character which requires to be annealed—to excite feelings which ought to be repressed—to encourage visions of happiness which can never be realized—to cherish affections which never can be reciprocated—and to prepare the heart for the reception of sorrows which can never be consoled. How far it may, or may not, be desirable, in this hard, struggling, working-day world of ours, to have that kind of character more generally diffused among us, I leave for others to decide. I am quite sure that it cannot be good to induce an *affectation* of its qualities; and I am equally sure that their reality will never be created

by any attempt of ours to cultivate an exotic taste for the productions of Art in the minds of the people. Such things do not modify the national character; the national character modifies them. This is seen by the differences by which the different schools of Art are distinguished. The Dutch or the Italian masters took their models from the objects before their eyes; and both one and the other seem to have left their countrymen pretty much what they had found them. Indeed, to suppose that the higher moral sensibilities of genius can be engendered in souls of a coarser nature by imparting to them a critical appreciation of pictures and statues, and music and poetry, involves, to my mind, as gross a metaphysical absurdity as if we should expect to awaken a grateful sense of melody in the deaf by teaching them harmonies—or to impart a feeling for the beauties of nature in the blind by making them acquainted with the rules of perspective. Pleasure in works of art, all men take; because, perhaps, we are of an imitative nature, and are intuitively pleased by witnessing efforts of successful imitation. But the pleasure will only be produced by such efforts as accord with the state of our character and the habits of our lives."

"Many horrors were perpetrated in the most enlightened period of the Heathen world. The progress of the arts and sciences did nothing for religion.

It enabled the idolater to erect more splendid temples, to carve larger and finer statues, to overlay them curiously with ivory, to invent more ornamental rites, to weave more graceful dances, and to breathe more refined and complicated harmonies around the shrines of his visionary deities; but it did no more. This was all that the March of Intellect, in classic times, ever effected for national religion."

The advocates of unsectarian education found no favour with Mr. Harness. He did not believe that, even if such a system could be practically carried out, it would really tend to the benefit of the community. "Secular instruction," he writes, "worketh, with other things, for good when it is combined with Religion; but separated from Religion, it is a mere accident whether it have a good, or an evil, or any influence at all on the formation of moral character. Yet, as I have said, an opinion is gaining ground among a certain class of philanthropists, that, as Religion cannot be taught, on account of our sectarian differences, the Government should produce some measure for the establishment of common schools in which—Religion being excluded—the teaching might be confined to such secular matters as we are all perfectly agreed upon. Now, this scheme, if it is ever brought to bear, must prove injurious to Christian faith. Such a measure—what-

ever may be the preamble of the Bill—would have the effect of placing the knowledge of God's Word and Law in a secondary position. The multitude would infer that what the State refrained from teaching must needs be of very inferior consequence to that which it undertakes to teach; and the result would be a gradual diminution and final loss of reverence for the Gospel.

"Nothing can sound more innocent than the proposition of assembling the children of all denominations in a common school-room, to be taught literature and science. But the common school-room involves a common school-master; and of what religion is that master to be? Is he to be of no religion? or of no particular religion? or of what religion? I know not how the Vicar of Leeds* may feel upon the matter; but, for myself, no amount of literary or scientific attainments would induce me to entrust any child in whom I was interested, during six hours a day for six days in the week, within the contagious sphere of the principles of a master who either held extreme Calvinistic views or who denied the divinity of our Lord. Others would act the same—and properly too, if they felt the same—towards a master who maintained the doctrines of the Roman or of the English Churches. But we are told that a man is

* Dr. Hook had published a letter on the subject.

not to teach Religion! Why, he can't help teaching it! If he have any religious opinions they will inevitably evince themselves; and if he be of no religion, it will have an influence on his instructions.

"Why, ever since the first dawn of the Reformation, the characters who occupy the principal places in our annals bear a different hue to every class of religionists among us. According to the bias of one sect, the chief promoters of the Reformation are regarded either as ministers of Satan or of God. Anne Bullen is either an incestuous adultress, the wily instigator of the ruin of Wolsey and the murder of Sir Thomas More; or she is the loveliest and the gayest, the most artless and the most innocent of victims! Queen Mary the First is either a patriot queen, acting justly and firmly, but not more severely than the spirit of her age allowed, in opposition to the attacks of a band of rebellious fanatics; or she is a benighted and unrelenting bigot, rejoicing in the persecution and polluted with the blood of the Saints! Now, these contradictory historical opinions are inseparably amalgamated. To every High Churchman, Charles the First is the last, and not the least revered, of Anglican Martyrs; to the whole body of Dissenters, he is the most subtle and impracticable of hypocrites."

Again, he remarks: "If schools of such an un-

sanctified description as some desire to see, be raised and continued, it is to be apprehended that 'when the Son of Man cometh' He will not 'find faith on the earth.' Such a fearful consequence may be inferred from an experiment of nineteen years which has been tried in the United States of America. There, they have a general education on this plan. They have tried the effect of such common schools for worldly literature and art and science, but without religion; and I will cite a few passages from a considerable number of authorities at my command, which will enable you to form some notion of its results. The opinions I am about to adduce were all delivered by citizens of the United States, not by clergymen who might be suspected of taking a prejudiced view of the question, but by laymen to whom no such suspicion can attach.

"'The persons,' says one, 'who, in former years were zealous in maturing our common school system have begun to open their eyes. They stand aghast at their own work, fearing that, instead of cherishing a lamb, they have been training up a wolf.' 'I know,' says another, 'thirteen young men who came from one school, and every one of them has rushed headlong to destruction.' 'I do not affirm,' says another, 'that education causes crime; I only affirm that the two are co-existing facts, and that

the system of common school education is attended with an increase of crime, because it is the education of only one side of human nature, and that not the controlling side. Man's moral and religious nature constitutes his other and better but undeveloped self.' 'The common school system,' says another, 'is proving a disastrous failure. From its first establishment to the present time it has been injurious to the character of the rising generation. The patrons of the system forgot that educated mind, without religion, is educated vice; and that mind can only be stimulated to seek its improvement by something higher, deeper, and more earnest than itself. Now they are reminded of it by the failure of the experiment.'"

"My plan," continues Mr. Harness, "a plan which has been floating in my mind for years and been often discussed among my friends, is simply this. The Government, insisting on its right, as rulers of a Christian nation, to see the people abundantly provided with the facilities of education and religious worship, should institute a permanent rate on all dwelling-houses, payable by the landlord, for building educational and religious edifices in populous places, and for supplying them with efficient ministers and masters. On paying the rate, the ratepayer should intimate whether his quota should contribute to the fund of the Church of

England, the Roman Catholics, or the Dissenters."

Mr. Harness had observed in his own parishes the happy results of religious education, not only upon the children, but also upon their parents. He alludes to them as follows :—

"'Truly do I thank my God,' said a mother, whose children had been educated at one of the National Schools, 'truly do I thank my God for the instruction which my children have received.' And hear her reason! Before her children were admitted to the school, she and her husband never attended any place of worship and were almost ignorant of God. After the elder daughter had been there some time, she said to her mother, 'Mother, you never go either to church or chapel; why do you not go?' She was so struck with this, and at her being taught in this manner by her child that from that time she has constantly attended Divine Service; and the united examples of the mother and the children have not been lost upon the father.

"Another instance is yet more strong. It relates to a father—a loose, disorderly, profligate kind of man, who spent much of his time and money in low excesses, and had reduced his wife and child to a state of the most abject and starving poverty. One Sunday afternoon, the intoxicated father had been swearing much, when his child told him that, from

what she had learnt at school, she knew such conduct to be extremely wicked. The father made no reply at the time; but on the Monday morning his wife was surprised to see him go out and procure food for his family; and so strong was the influence of his child's reproof, that he has been from that hour a reformed and altered being—a sober, quiet, and industrious man, a good husband, and a good father."

CHAPTER IX.

THE METROPOLITAN DISTRICT-VISITING ASSOCIATION.—EVIL RESULTS OF INJUDICIOUS CHARITY.

"In 1844 Mr. Harness, under the name of "Presbyter Catholicus," wrote a pamphlet which attracted considerable attention. It was called forth by a proposal on the part of the Bishop of London to establish a "Metropolitan Visiting and Relief Association." Mr. Harness was strongly opposed to such a measure. He considered that charitable relief could be more advantageously bestowed in private, to those with whose wants and characters we are personally acquainted, than by the means of the agency of any public society. "The private course," he remarks, "is safest for ourselves, without desiring to derogate from the praise of those who extend themselves beyond the bounds of their ordinary duties to set on foot schemes of distant charity, and who are led by an ardent zeal for the welfare of their race to divert the streams of their benevolence into channels far wider and more

remote than those in which they would naturally flow. I cannot help observing that there are very few who venture, without danger, to emulate their conduct. Before a man devotes his time, his faculties, and his fortune to the benefit of strangers, he ought to occupy a situation absolutely free from the responsibility of all the claims of relatives, friends, and neighbours.

"Public charities," he observes, "create the necessity they relieve, but do not relieve all the necessity they create;" and he strongly objects to money being distributed in that way, except under the careful supervision of a responsible and well qualified Government officer. This opinion he corroborates by facts, in the following terms:

"Pray, my Lord, allow me to call your attention for a moment to the consequences which, from the natural course of things, might have been expected, and which in fact have, to a certain degree, followed the institution of this society.

"In the midst of the mildest Winter we ever happen to remember, when the poor at the north of London were perhaps better off than they had been for years; during a Christmas which, it is said, witnessed the dressing of more meat dinners in St. Giles's than its cellars and its garrets had for a long time rejoiced in the savour of; at this moment—when such a measure was perfectly uncalled-

for by any extraordinary emergency—there appeared a public announcement in all the newspapers of a new association for promoting the Relief of the Destitution in the Metropolis. These very advertisements were pregnant with immediate evil. No sooner had they made it known over the kingdom that such a scheme of ill-judging philanthropy, supported by Royal patronage, and managed by Patrician Directors, was in agitation, than multitudes of the labouring classes who were not so well off as might be desired in the country, begged their way to London, to participate in the distribution of the funds. The sum already collected appeared to be immense. New subscribers were daily adding to its amount. What it might eventually become, none could calculate; far less could any calculate, or even think of calculating, what would be the numbers likely to apply to it for succour, or what the infinitesimal portion of relief which would fall to the lot of each, when the advertised thousands were subjected to the process of reduction and division to answer the demands of its claimants. At once London was looked upon as the *El Dorado* of the indigent; and thither every adventurous pauper within a practicable distance bent his way. The march of intellect had disabused them of the idle notions which existed in the days of Whittington; they no longer believed that the Metropolis

was paved with gold, and that there any man might fill his purse by picking up the stones; but they believed, and they had high, royal, noble, episcopal authority for believing, that there no one, except a madman or an idiot, need ever be in want, and that all might fill their bellies by applying to the stores of 'The Metropolitan Visiting and Relief Association." If there was distress before—as there was, and always will be—the announcement of this institution doubled and trebled it. There was not sufficient work in London to occupy all the hands which were stretching out their fingers for employment; and thousands of additional hands were summoned,* as if by a stirring *reveillé*, to join the scramble, and increase the difficulty of obtaining any odd job that might happen to occur. At the outset, a great injury was thus done to the labouring poor of London. A multitude of strangers was introduced to compete with them for employment. But this was not all. These emigrants from the country came, with their wants and appli-

* "This circumstance is alluded to, but very *tenderly*, in the last Report of the Mendicity Society: 'The managers are of opinion, that the great facility now afforded the idle and profligate to obtain food and shelter has greatly diminished their anxiety to seek for employment; and that *very many* have been drawn to London who would never have ventured to come there, without the security now afforded to them against the evils to which improvidence would formerly have exposed them.'—*Report for* 1844."

cations, to drain those charitable supplies of coal and bread, of flannels and blankets, of soup and potatoes, which rightfully belonged to our resident mendicants, and which they had calculated upon as part of their Winter resources. When we consider the loss thus incurred by our own poor, and add to it all the wretchedness which must have been suffered, both on their journey and after their arrival, by those deluded persons who flocked to London on seeing the advertisement of the "Metropolitan Relief Association," we can have no doubt but that for the £20,000 worth of good which its directors promised to do, according to their widely promulgated subscription list, they must have inflicted at least double that amount of misery; and this, probably, before their plans were sufficiently matured to have enabled them to disburse a farthing for its relief. So impossible is public charity! So indispensable is it that in alms-giving the left hand should not know what the right doeth.'"

Mr. Harness proceeds to trace the probable course of the movement in a particular parish:— "Let us look at the working of the scheme. The Rev. Mr. A., Incumbent of B., is anxious to show his respect for his diocesan, by acting in correspondence with your Lordship's views. He is also not unwilling to possess himself of a portion of the funds, which he finds are at the disposal of the General Committee, and

which he thinks may be very well expended on some of his more indigent parishioners. Stimulated by this compound motive, he summons a certain number of his more steady churchgoers and frequent communicants to meet him in his school-room; reads Mr. ——'s circular to them; lays before them as much as he can collect of the scheme proposed; states his intention of adopting it in his own parish; and requests the favour of their co-operation as visitors. Now, who are these visitors to be? The noblemen and gentlemen of the General Committee do not seem to have contemplated any difficulty on this score. Every obstacle is evaporated before the glowing heat of their enthusiasm, like clouds before the sun. Speak to them of visitors; and—it matters not where the parish, or what the population—their active fancy instantly conjures up a group of Christian ladies and self-denying Christian gentlemen, with knowledge equal to their zeal, and zeal proportioned to their knowledge, with plenty of time at their disposal, and willingness (at a hint from their pastor) to spend it all in the service of the poor; with humility which can meet every man on terms of equality as a brother; with gentleness which can never offend; with charity which can sympathize with every description of distress; with a quick insight into character which intuitively distinguishes the true from the false—the sufferer

from the impostor; and with a nice tact and judgment which, apprehending at a glance the nature of the ill to be relieved, never allow them to be mistaken as to the best mode of administering the relief required.

"Such are the qualities necessary to form a good visitor of the poor—who is to go, a stranger among strangers, to deal with affliction in all its variety of forms, and with imposture in all its Protean transformations. Can the General Committee really suppose that the characters fitted for such an office are readily to be met with? or that, when met with, they will require no discipline and education to prepare them for its duties? Talk of the imaginative powers of the lover, the lunatic, or the poet! Why, such persons are not half so 'compact of imagination' as the staid members of this new Joint Stock Charity Association! A very few days since, one of its zealous supporters told your Lordship's correspondent that 'nothing was easier to be met with than men and women calculated to act as district visitors, for the only qualities required were *sincere religious principles and sound common sense!*' Nothing more! The two rarest qualities in the world to be found—apart; and, of course, still more rare to be met with—in union! But supposing the Parish of B. should be most highly blest, and be peculiarly rich in individuals of this happy

religious and mental constitution; they are precisely the individuals whom the Rev. Mr. A. will, on establishing his Visiting Society, endeavour in vain to press into his service. The man of sincere religious principles and sound common sense is, of all others, the least ready to take such charges upon himself. He has his own business to attend to; he has his duty to fulfil in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call him; he is alive to all its weighty responsibilities; he does not do all he ought, and heartily desires to do more; he knows that in taking upon himself the charge of families with which he has no connexion, but the very loose ties of the same parochial tenancy, he thrusts himself into the responsibilities of those relations or friends, neighbours or employers, who are morally and religiously bound to render them what assistance may be required; and he conscientiously objects to undertake such offices, and thus to violate the Apostle's precepts by 'stretching himself beyond his measure.'

"But when these, the most valuable members of his congregation, have drifted off from him, where is the Rev. Mr. A. to look for his coadjutors? He may command the services of the morbid pietist—of the restless fanatic—of the idler who is weary of himself—and of the prying, curious, chattering busy-body who wants to know how everybody lives

and to settle everybody's affairs according to her rule. Mr. Timmins has retired from business; he has always finished his newspaper by twelve; and, between that and his luncheon at one, he will have no objection to see a few poor families in his neighhourhood. Miss Yeddenly and her sister, Miss Laura, who have nothing in the world to do from breakfast to dinner—after they have watered the geraniums, cleaned the canary birds, and fed the cat—will be only too happy to undertake any charge to oblige the Rector. Miss Groves has a kind of *penchant* for the red-haired curate; and, though her mother (who is rather blind and very rheumatic) wishes her to remain at home and read *Ellen Middleton* to her, she is altogether at the disposal of her spiritual guide. Mrs. Gilks, a widow of small independence and questionable gentility, is delighted to accept an avocation which promises to bring her into familiar contact with the more aristocratic portion of her neighbours. Mr. Docket, the little solicitor, hopes to obtain the advantages of being advertised all over the parish as 'the Honorary Secretary' of the charity, and volunteers the services of his wife and daughter; while Mr. Grills, the butcher, Mr. Allum, the baker, Mr. Crib, the grocer, Mr. Slate, the coal-merchant, Mr. Serge, the draper, and Mr. Spriggett, of the potato warehouse, are all ardent in the cause—partly with a

view of pleasing their excellent customer the Rector; partly on account of the beadle-like consequence to be derived from the office; and, partly, from a consideration of the amount to which their visits among the poor may be remunerated by tickets for articles on their respective shops.

"This is the class of persons, my Lord, on whom will devolve the most delicate charge that can be entrusted to the despatch of man—the charge of administering comfort to the desponding, the suffering, and the broken-hearted. At first, for a month or so, the Rev. Mr. A. may persuade a few more able hands to assist him in getting his scheme out of dock and setting it afloat. But these will one by one desert him, and eventually leave it to be worked by the sort of people I have described. At all events, from July to November, when every body is out of town, into such hands it must inevitably fall.

"But, however, after a little time, 'The B. Visiting and Relief Society' is formed. The President, the Treasurer, the Secretary, the Committee, are appointed; the number of visitors is complete; the grant from the great central fund has been paid, and is increased by a numerous list of annual subscriptions. The parish is divided into districts, and a certain number of ladies and gentlemen appointed as superintendents to each.

"You set up an office for the distribution of unearned food and fuel! Immediately, all the idle and improvident, the drunken and the dissolute, will flock to the scramble; and these will be followed, in rapidly increasing numbers, by others whom the display of the gifts bestowed upon the first applicants will tempt away from their daily labour, to try the chance of winning for themselves a share of those fruits of idleness which are, at first, so sweet in flavour, but which leave so bitter an after-taste.

"I cannot refrain from citing, on this subject, some cases described by Mr. Brushfield.* This gentleman was one of the parish officers of Christ Church, Spitalfields. He states: 'My general mode of investigation was, not to make inquiries elsewhere, but to visit the residences of those persons whom I suspected—which, by the way, was most of the paupers—first on the Saturday, and next on the Sunday. On Saturday they expected me, and I had, generally, some cause to doubt the appearance of their dwellings on that day. In general, those who wanted to impose upon us overcoloured the picture; and certainly the pictures they drew were often very appalling. One Saturday, accompanied by one of the churchwardens, I visited ten places. The scenes of distress were

* In the same Parliamentary Paper, p. 279.

quite frightful. There were two cases which seemed to be cases of extreme misery. In one house a man named Bagg, who had a wooden leg, was found sitting as if sunk in despair. He said he had no work, and had no food that day, nor since the evening before. His wife was afflicted with a bad leg; she was in bed, and stated that she had not been able to get out of bed for six weeks. The room was in a miserable plight, dirty and wretched. I looked into the cupboard, and found no provisions there. The appearance of the place was such that the churchwarden could not forbear giving the man some pecuniary relief at once. The other case was that of a man named Anster, who had for some time before been chargeable to the parish as an out-pauper. The appearance of his room was most deplorable. There was no trace of any kind of food; and the children were ragged, dirty, squalid, and wretched. I desired the wife to tell her husband to apply to me for relief in the evening; when, as I was fully convinced of the necessity by the misery I witnessed, it had been my intention to give them some assistance. In the evening, the husband and wife called together. I expressed my regret that they should be obliged to come to the parish, and asked if the husband had any prospect of obtaining work? He declared that he had neither work, nor any prospect of getting any at

present. I judged by his appearance that he had been drinking, and said, 'Well, call upon me on Monday morning, and I will see what I can do for you.' They expressed themselves very much obliged to me, and went away apparently quite pleased; though, according to their representation, they were absolutely in a state of starvation.

"'On the Sunday morning' (continues Mr. Brushfield), 'I renewed my visits. The first case I went to was that of this man, Anster. It was about nine o'clock in the morning when I called. I opened the door, and then knocked, when I found they were in bed. I saw the wife jump out of bed, and run in great haste to fling a cloth over a table which was standing in the middle of the room; but, in her haste to get away, and in her confusion, she pulled the covering off, and exposed to my view a large piece of beef, a piece of mutton, and parcels of tea, sugar, bread, butter, &c. The man called from the bed, 'D—n them, never mind them; you know they belong to your father.' I told them that was enough, and immediately left the place. They never afterwards applied for relief.

"'When I visited the house of Bagg' (continues Mr. Brushfield), 'I found Mrs. Bagg out of bed and at breakfast; she had her tea, and he had his coffee. I saw a neck of mutton on one shelf, and two loaves

on another shelf of the cupboard, which was empty the day before. I went into his workshop—he was a silk-dresser—and found it full of work. The man swore horribly; and I left the place. I do not know that he ever asked for assistance again.'

"But," resumes Mr. Harness, "I will take the very fairest view of the working of the B. Society, I will imagine the impossible case, that no imposition shall be practised on the visitors—or, at all events, that the plans of the Rev. Mr. A.—— and his Committee have been so well arranged as to crush it in the bud. The parish is split into such small and manageable portions that every visitor has only a very few houses under his superintendence. These he will call at from time to time; and, by personally making himself acquainted with the circumstances and wants of each family, will not only anticipate the necessity of any application for assistance, but preclude the possibility of fraud. Now, admirable as this scheme may appear to many, I beg leave to state, from my intimate knowledge of the best class of the labouring poor, that, though they may not exhibit any incivility to the strange lady or gentleman who thus—impertinently and without invitation—forces her or his way into their apartments, they feel, as they will very often express themselves, quite as much hurt by such an

indecent outrage on the sacred privacy of their home as that lady or gentleman visitor would feel if any poor person were to obtrude himself, uncalled for, into the boudoir of the one or the library of the other. When your correspondent, my Lord, once asked an old Scotchwoman 'why she always locked her door against the visiting lady?' her answer was, 'She's an idle, chattering body; and I'd rather want her coals than be fashed wi' her questions!'

"The English population will be fallen low, indeed, when the industrious classes are so degraded as to have lost all sense of the reverence which is due to their own hearths, and not to feel the republican part of their national character rise indignantly against the arrogance which considers a better coat and a fuller purse as affording any one who may choose to enter upon the office a sufficient warrant for breaking in, at all times, however inconvenient, upon their families and interfering with their concerns. 'Poverty has naturally a proud spirit: pauperism a base one—now servile, now insolent.'*

"But I will return to the Rev. Mr. A——, and the B. Visiting Society. It is now ready for business; the season for its operation has commenced. Work is slack; the snow is on the ground; and

* Walker's "Original," page 195.

there is a considerable degree of distress among the inhabitants of the poorer districts. The visitor sets out upon his round, to do his best towards discovering where it presses most severely, and to apply, as judiciously as he can, the funds entrusted to him for its relief. I will put no imaginary case: I will only describe such circumstances as I have known to exist, and are fresh in my recollection. He comes to a house inhabited entirely by labouring people—a family in each room. On the first floor, in one apartment, he finds a man, his wife, and two children. They have every comfort about them. The husband is a shoe-maker; the wife helps at the binding; the eldest child is sent to school at two-pence a week; the other is too young to leave the mother. At present, their whole earnings do not exceed ten shillings a week; but they had saved some money in the summer, and they hope to be in receipt of better wages in the spring. In the other apartment, lives a man with his wife and one child. He is also a shoe-maker. His room is filthy, offensive in smell, and destitute of any furniture, except his bench, a black tea-kettle, two or three articles of damaged earthenware, and a lump of dirty shavings, which, with some old horse-cloths, are bundled up in a corner of the room by day, and spread out at night to serve the family as a bed. The circumstances of this man,

as to the amount of his weekly earnings, are precisely those of his neighbour in the next room; though in one sense he is better off, as he has only one child to feed, and no schooling to pay for. But he earns only ten shillings a week. This must supply him, his wife and child, with lodging, clothing, food, and firing. In the Spring, Summer, and Autumn, he had higher wages; but then he owed a large bill at the shop, and had spent the rest; so that, now, he is really in a state of poverty, having borrowed whenever he could find any neighbour to lend—run in debt wherever he could get credit —and pawned every article of dress or furniture on which a penny could be raised.

"Here, then, are two cases, in which the visitor is called upon take an active part; they may be considered as fair representatives of nearly all the cases which he will meet with in the course of his perambulations. How is the visitor to deal with them? Will he not give to either? Then he may as well fling his Journal, and his relief tickets, and all the apparatus of a district-visitor into the fire; for he will very rarely meet with any necessity greater than that of the family I have last described. The distress, it is true, has been brought on by imprudence and vice; but if he refuses help to all the misery which originates in such causes, he will find very few claimants on his benevolence.

"Will he, then, assist this case? If he does, he will confer on the dissolute and imprudent that which his prudent and virtuous neighbour in the adjoining room is unable to purchase. The Visitor's ticket for bread and coals renders this unworthy fellow's income for the week far better than that of the industrious, independent, high-minded man who is bravely struggling against his difficulties on the other side of the partition which divides their rooms; and alms, so given, operate, to all intents and purposes, as a premium on vice and a great discouragement to virtue.

"I cannot, my Lord, help thinking that the experience of Mr. J. K. Barker might be very advantageously taken as a guide to the District Visitor on such an occasion. This gentleman had been most kindly active in the administration of the parochial affairs of Hambledon. He says:* "There were two labourers who were reported to me as extremely industrious men, maintaining large families. Neither of them had ever applied for parish relief. I thought it advisable that they should receive some mark of public approbation; and we gave them one pound apiece from the parish. Very shortly after this, they both became applicants for relief, and have continued so ever since. I am not aware that any other cause existed for this change in the con-

* "Administration of the Poor Laws," page 85.

duct of the two men, except the above-mentioned gratuity.'

"Nothing can permanently better the condition of the working classes but an increase of prudence.'* The Visiting Society has a direct tendency to destroy the exercise of this virtue. In addressing the labouring classes, it takes the care of themselves out of their own hands. Were the father of a family to say, 'If, my lads, you are in any difficulty about paying your bills at Christmas, never mind, come to me, I'll settle them for you,' does not your Lordship think he would very soon find his lads always in difficulty about their Christmas bills, and that he would have more presented than he could conveniently pay? The case is precisely the same with Relief Societies. The effect which they have upon the poor population of a parish cannot be better illustrated than by an anecdote related by Thomas Walker, the late excellent Police Magistrate: 'The founder of Guy's Hospital left to the Trustees a fund to be distributed to such of his relations as should, from time to time, fall into distress. The fund, at length, became insufficient to meet the applications; and the Trustees, thinking it hard to refuse any claimants, trenched upon the funds of the Hospital; the consequence of which was that no Guy was ever known to prosper. So that if any individual

* Walker's "Original," page 251.

could be wicked enough to wish the ruin of his posterity for ever, his surest means would be to leave his property in trust, to be distributed 'to them only in distress.'

"Just so is it with all these public charities for the poor. Like Guy's fund, they set before the eyes of the labouring classes an inducement to distress; and those classes will never prosper till such ill-judging friends as the 'Metropolitan District Visiting and Relief Association' can be persuaded to withdraw their pernicious protection from them. All these newly-invented benevolent Institutions, which are formed to help the poor through every difficulty of life, are framed in direct opposition to the counsels of Providence; for all those difficulties were designed by the Almighty as a part of a wise but severe discipline, to compel us to look beyond the present and provide for the future, by suffering from the idleness or imprudence of the past.

"Whenever we attempt to amend the scheme of Providence and to interfere with the government of the world, we had need to be very circumspect, lest we do more harm than good. In New England, they once thought *blackbirds* useless and mischievous to the corn; and they made efforts to destroy them. The consequence was the blackbirds were diminished; but a kind of worm which devoured their grass, and which the black-

birds used to feed on, increased prodigiously. Then, finding their loss in grass much greater than their saving in corn, they wished again for the blackbirds.'* Nothing can be more apt than this illustration. The *corn* represents the cardinal virtues—the *blackbirds* the ordinary exigencies of human life—the efforts to destroy them *public charities*—and the *worms*, which multiplied in proportion as the blackbirds were destroyed, are the vices, sloth, intemperance, and carelessness of the future."

With reference to giving relief in kind instead of money, Mr. Harness adds: "A poor person will always make a shilling purchase twice as much again as a rich one will do for him. As one out of many cases which I could cite in proof of this, I will extract from the Journal of a Clergyman (who, by-the-by, is a London Curate of eighteen years' standing, and identifies himself in all my views) what was done by one of his poor with *the small sum of sixpence farthing:*

1lb. of meat	$2\frac{1}{2}$
$\frac{1}{2}$lb. of flour	$1\frac{1}{4}$
Carried forward . . .	$3\frac{3}{4}$

* A letter of Franklin's, preserved in "The Diary of a Lover of Literature." See *Gentleman's Magazine*, New Series, Vol. I., page 12.

Brought forward . . .	$3\frac{3}{4}$
7lbs. of coals	$1\frac{1}{4}$
Carrots	$\frac{1}{2}$
Potatoes	$\frac{1}{2}$
Turnips	$\frac{1}{4}$
	$6\frac{1}{4}d.$

The meat was the trimmings of tongues, excellent beef and no bone; the fat was used as suet to convert the flour into dumplings. The articles were all, except the meat, bought of the small dealers who alone will give themselves the trouble of selling such small quantities. 'I never', says my friend, 'wish to taste better soup than this made. It dined the widow and her son, a lad of fifteen, for two days; and gave him a supper besides.' Yet we are told the poor can't manage their own affairs! They must be relieved with tickets, not with money! What could any visiting lady or gentleman have done with such a pittance?

"Besides, under this system of *truck* charity, how do we know that the visitor will always have the discretion to adjust properly the sort of relief which is required by the nature of the necessity? As an example of the egregious blunders committed in this way, we must give another extract from the Journal of our clerical friend: 'Went to see Mrs. Cole.

The visiting gentleman from —— Chapel was in the room. This seene occurred. The visitor asked the poor woman, who was very ill, "Are you married?" "Yes."—"Husband in work?" "No."—"How many children have you?" "Six."—"What provisions have you in the house?" "Only the loaf from the parish."—"Husband out of work, wife ill in bed, six children, very little provisions." This he said aloud while writing in a book; then giving a scrap of paper to Mrs. Cole, he added "Here's an order for six yards of flannel," and walked out of the room.'

"Again (I copy the words of the journal): 'There is no creature in the world so hard-hearted as the woman who makes charity her business. This morning's scene has annoyed and grieved me very much. I called on poor Mrs. Smart. She cannot have more than a day or two to live. The poor creature was, as usual, on the three chairs placed together, which form her only bed; but sitting up, and in a state of frightful nervous agitation. Her hands were clasped and pressed tight against her breast. She was rocking herself backward and forward as violently as her weakness would allow, and repeating with continually increased rapidity of utterance, till the words became confounded and were scarcely distinguishable, "Oh! Lord! take away my heart of stone, and give me a

heart of flesh!" Beside her, stood a tall, stout, bolt-upright woman, securely defended against the Winter's cold by an impenetrable mass of shawls and furs, with a face rubicund and shining, and looking as if Providence had placed an ample supply of the treasures of this life at her disposal, of which she availed herself in three ample meals a day, with a pint of porter at each.

"On my entering the room, the Visitor noticed me with that air of formal and supercilious distance which party-spirited ladies are apt to exhibit towards those of the clergy whom they condemn as not sufficiently spiritual in their views. Pointing to the dying creature, she said: "A sad sight, Sir! A miserable end! No hope, I fear, here?" "Why, what has happened? There was none of this excitement when I left this morning." "The heart of stone! The heart of stone! No answer to her prayers! No fruit of the Spirit! No joy!" "Oh! Madam! why do you pass so severe a sentence on our poor sister?" "Can you consider this anything but a state of reprobation? Where is the heart of flesh? Where is the joy?" "*Joy!* Madam!" "What! do you mean to assert, Sir, that *joy* is not an indispensable fruit of the Spirit?" "This is really no place or time for religious

controversy; when you have finished your visit, I will return to Mrs. Smart." "I have done Sir! I am going; pray don't let me drive you away." And doubling her boa over her double chin, without deigning to look at the poor creature whom she had condemned to everlasting perdition, she stalked out of the room.

"As soon as the visiting lady left us, I sat down on a box beside poor, ignorant, inoffensive Mrs. Smart, and did my best to tranquillize her. I first induced her to stop the quick, anxious, hysterical repetition of the words which had been put into her mouth. When I had succeeded in this, and she became composed, I explained the nature both of "a heart of stone" and "a heart of flesh." I showed her that the one signified a state of mind which was insensible to all religious impressions; the other, a state of mind which was open to such impressions. I, by my questions, led her back, through a calm course of self-examination on these important subjects, to the hopeful reliance on God's mercy through Christ, which she had enjoyed in my previous visits; and then, after reading some prayers from the Visitation Service, I took my leave of her for to-day'."

Mr. Harness proceeds to suggest that, instead of

lay-readers being employed, the number of the educated clergy should be increased. "My experience teaches me that the individuals on whom the office of lay-reader* is apt to fall, are the last, even among persons inadequately instructed, to whom it could be safely confided.

"By far the most creditable specimen of this class whom I have known employed in that part of London where I reside, was an Irishman, and not wanting in those gifts of fluency and quickness which are common to his nation. By trade he was a journeyman house-painter; but he had a spirit which disdained the fustian jacket and the paper cap. He cast about for some less humble and more lucrative mode of life; and, after absenting himself for a few weeks, he returned among us, in a full suit of mourning, and sent circulars round the neighbourhood to inform all those who were willing to trust their teeth in his hands, that he was practising as a 'surgeon-dentist.' This business he did not pursue for a much longer period than he had devoted to acquiring the knowledge of it.

"Not meeting with the success he had anticipated

* He proposed as a substitute to admit to Holy Orders men "who had retired from their profession or business, and desired to dedicate the remainder of their days to the service of God and the succour of His creatures."

in this profession, he resumed the red pipkin and the paint brush, and did jobs, as his printed cards assured us, 'on the most moderate terms and his own account.' But Art proving as little productive to him as Science, he again appeared in his black habiliments, and was seen perambulating the streets of the next parish as the lay-reader, or, as he designated himself, the 'acting minister,' under the auspices of one of the Societies who have undertaken the supply of cheap religion to the poor. What has lately become of him I know not. The last time I saw him, he talked very seriously of offering himself, unordained as he was, to supply the vacant chaplaincy of one of the prisons. I know no harm of the man except his fickleness of purpose; but whether an individual in whose bonnet the bee buzzes so incessantly is exactly fitted for the very serious office of inculcating the truths of the Gospel beside the hearths of the afflicted or by the pillows of the dying, will, I believe, be doubted by everyone who does not consider fluency and excitability as better qualifications for a religious teacher than calm piety and enlightened judgment."

The pamphlet from which the above extracts are taken was a development of an article which Mr. Harness had sent to Mr. Lockhart for insertion in

the *Quarterly Review*. Mr. Lockhart declined it in the following terms :—

"My dear Harness,

"I have read your MS. It is exceedingly able —most effective—most capital, in short; and I have no doubt you are right in the main.

"I don't doubt, however, that *good* has been and is daily done by the sort of Societies you are attacking, and I could not publish the article without several interpolations.

"But I couldn't, were it one chrysolite, accept it for this number. I told you truly—I am full. I publish this month, and no article ever has much chance unless it comes to hand at a much earlier stage of my operations.

"I am sorry indeed, but can't help this. I see you are in a hurry, and no wonder; for really much of it is as good as anything Sydney Smith ever wrote.

"Yours ever,
"H. L."

On receiving the above letter, Mr. Harness published a considerable part of this article in the *Times;* and it was so well received that the editor wrote to him requesting further communications on the subject.

The year after this pamphlet appeared, Mr. Harness left St. Pancras. More than one reason induced him to seek a change. Twenty years of unremitting labour in a metropolitan district, which had meanwhile increased from 16,000 to 23,000, had rendered him less capable of bodily exertion; and an accident which had befallen him on a summer excursion, made his parochial duties more laborious to him. Notwithstanding his lameness from infancy—which always caused him more or less pain in walking—Mr. Harness was an active pedestrian, sometimes accomplishing as much as thirty miles in one day; and when on a tour in Wales, about ten years before this date, as he was descending a hill with a heavy knapsack on his back, his knee suddenly gave way, and he found that he had fractured the knee-pan. After this accident, he was always in danger of falling; he required the assistance of a stick; and the mounting steep and narrow stair-cases became a matter of difficulty, if not of danger, to him. To these reasons for resigning his London cure, we should add that he always loved the country, and now became unusually weary of his long confinement to town.

In a letter to Miss Mitford, written at this time, he thus expresses his feelings :—

"I wish I could get to Reading to visit you;

but alas! my every hour is fettered with occupations. Oh, country! country! country! Do you know the old play in which a lad, who had been a beggar, but became civilized and domesticated in the house of a county magistrate, grows wild for liberty every Spring, and flies from his quiet comfortable home to live at random in the fields, and under the shade of trees? I'm just like that man. The sun never shines upon a green twig in the Square* but I pine for the beauties and the calm of the country."

Mr. Harness thought that now, in his fifty-fourth year, he might very suitably retire and accept a less onerous sphere of usefulness. He was never an ambitious man, and rather avoided than courted public commendation. But he loved those among whom he had laboured during the Spring and Summer-tide of his life, and was deeply touched at the concern they manifested on his departure; and in his farewell address he confessed that he should not even then have negotiated for an exchange, had he not been suffering from "some unaccountable languor and depression of spirits." It was then too late for him to alter his determination; but his parishioners, in memory of his long and faithful ministry among them, subscribed for a

* Mecklenburgh Square. He then lived in Heathcote Street, just out of the Square.

handsome testimonial,* which was publicly presented to him by Mr. Serjeant Talfourd.

The change proved truly unfortunate. Although Mr. Harness had constantly moved in what is called "the world" (it was his pride to say that he associated with all classes, from the highest to the lowest), there never was a man less imbued with its maxims, or less animated by its spirit. Generous and unsuspicious to a fault, he attributed to others the high motives by which he was himself actuated. As a consequence he was, therefore, generally unfortunate in business transactions; even to such an extent that his income would have been considerably diminished, had it not been from time to time unexpectedly supplemented by legacies from friends and strangers. In the present instance, without instituting the necessary inquiries, he accepted a retired living, in place of his London incumbency; and when he came to take possession of his rural retreat, he found to his cost that justice had now deserted not only the town, but also the country. The church and parsonage had been allowed to fall completely out of repair; and as he would have been personally liable for dilapidations, he finally resolved to adopt the advice of a friend and not to enter into possession.

Having thus lost his position, he was obliged to

* A massive silver candelebrum.

seek some other duty, and he became Minister of Brompton Chapel. Here he remained for three years, when, at the suggestion of his old friend, Dean Milman, he commenced to collect funds and make arrangemets for the building of All Saints, Knightsbridge.

CHAPTER X.

BUILDING OF ALL SAINTS', KNIGHTSBRIDGE.—CONTINUED FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN MR. HARNESS AND MISS MITFORD.—TOKEN OF ESTEEM.—HER LAST LETTERS AND DEATH.—COMMENCEMENT OF THE "LIFE OF MARY RUSSELL MITFORD."—DIFFICULTIES.—PROGRESS OF THE WORK. INTIMACY WITH MR. DYCE.

MR. HARNESS's longing for the country was to a certain extent gratified by his position at Knightsbridge. When he first resided in Hyde Park Terrace, the neighbourhood bordering on Rotten Row was laid out in large gardens shaded by luxuriant trees, and melodious with the songs of the linnet and nightingale. His own house, while it faced the Park, commanded from the back a wide view over the country as far as Epsom and the Surrey hills. At first, the intention was to build the church just inside the railings of Hyde Park, and a piece of ground had been assigned for the purpose; but the Commissioners of Woods and Forests afterwards withdrew their grant, and Mr. Harness was obliged to content himself with a site somewhat further removed from the Kensington Road than was desir-

able. The money collected for the building amounted to £10,500; £1,100 of which was contributed by Mr. Harness, and a considerable portion of the remainder by his personal friends.

Mr. Harness was fond of classic designs, and the Italian style of architecture was selected for the church, a bell-tower, or campanile, being afterwards added to it.* The Minister's income was almost entirely dependent upon the pew-rents; and although the gross revenue exceeded £1,100 per annum, Mr. Harness scarcely received £400 out of it; partly owing to the liberal manner in which all those in his employment were remunerated. He was always unwilling to tax his congregation, and persistently refused to allow charity sermons to be preached for any but local objects. At the same time, he never called for any assistance towards defraying the cost of repairs or other outgoings connected with the edifice, which amounted to a very considerable sum.

The incidental notices which have occurred in the foregoing chapters are sufficient to indicate the affectionate friendship which throughout life existed between Mr. Harness and Miss Mitford. They were bound together not only by early associations, but by a mutual geniality of temperament, and a sympathy in

* In 1860, at a cost of £1,400, to which Mr. Harness contributed £500.

each other's tastes and pursuits. Both were ardent lovers of literature, especially of the more social branches of it, and both fully appreciated the powerful influence obtained by the Drama. Miss Mitford had an especial predilection for this kind of composition. "If I have any talent," she writes, "it is for the Drama;" and we can imagine the relief with which she must have flown from the cold cynicism of her father to the kindly encouragement of her early friend, who bade her continue in the path she loved. Nor can we assert that his support was ill-judged, when we read the many noble and touching passages which adorn "Rienzi," and recollect the success it achieved—a success which would have distinguished its author had she never etched a single episode of village life. There may perhaps have been also a kinder motive for Mr. Harness's encouragement; for the theatre then offered better hopes of pecuniary remuneration than any other field of literature.

The affectionate regard which Miss Mitford felt towards her early friend is well shown by the following gratifying offer:

"Three Mile Cross,
"April 4, 1837.

"My Dear William,

"I have only one moment in which to offer a peti-

tion to you. I have a little trumpery volume called 'Country Stories,' about to be published by Saunders and Otley. Will you permit me to give these Tales some little value in my own eyes by inscribing them (of course in a few true and simple words) to you, my old and most kind friend? I would not dedicate a play to you, for fear of causing you injury in your profession; but I do not think that this slight testimony of a very sincere affection could do you harm in that way; for even those who do not allow novels in their house, sanction my little books.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"M. R. MITFORD."

The dedication was as follows:—

To
THE REV. WILLIAM HARNESS,
Whose old hereditary friendship
Has been the pride and pleasure
Of her happiest hours,
Her consolation in the sorrows,
and
Her support in the difficulties of life,
This little volume
Is most respectfully and affectionately
Inscribed by
THE AUTHOR.

But although there was such a congeniality in

literary taste between Mr. Harness and Miss Mitford, they were at issue on a more important subject. Miss Mitford's views on Religion were decidedly 'broad,' although they would have appeared narrow in comparison with some of the present day. Mr. Harness, as we have seen, was a man of sound doctrine and faithfully attached to the Church of England, and his friend's views caused some dissatisfaction to his orthodox mind. He desired to bring her round to more correct opinions, and apparently wrote to her on the subject; for we find her, in a letter, tenderly requesting him not to press arguments upon her which could not alter her convictions, and deprecating the discussion of anything which might create a distance between two such early friends. After this, Mr. Harness forbore making any further allusions to such matters; but it is satisfactory to know that Miss Mitford remained a member of the Church in which she had been educated.

If there was any person beyond the pale of Mr. Harness's Christian forbearance, that individual was Dr. Mitford. The reckless manner in which he squandered the family property, and his selfishness even to the last, when he became entirely dependent on his daughter's incessant toil, often continued by night as well as by day,

would have estranged the affections of any but one,

> "Whose kind heart refused to discover
> The faults which so many could find."

The history of Dr. Mitford's extravagance and folly have been written by Mr. Harness himself. Like other men of his stamp, the Doctor seems to have been in turn the impostor and the dupe. Mr. Harness disliked not only his morals, but also his manners, his self-sufficiency and loud talk, and could scarcely understand the amount of filial infatuation which led Miss Mitford to speak of his "modesty" and "excellence."

Notwithstanding Miss Mitford's slavery at the pen, the Doctor died considerably in debt; and although her poverty was great, she retained such a filial regard for his memory, that she boldly announces:—"Everybody shall be paid, if I sell the gown off my back, or pledge my little pension." In these difficulties a suggestion was made, by those who knew her wide popularity, that a subscription should be set on foot to raise a sum to meet these liabilities. The response to the appeal thus made by Mr. Harness and other friends was more liberal than could have been expected. The following is a letter from Mrs. Opie on this subject:—

"Lady's Lane,
"2nd Month, 24th, 1843.

"My Dear Friend,

"I thought I should see thy name on poor dear Miss Mitford's Committee. What a sad tale she has to tell! How she has been tried! And what a daughter she has been to a most unworthy father! I know no one like her in self-sacrifice and patient endurance. Surely, under such circumstances, the creditors will take less than their due, and wait for the rest till she can pay it. So few persons like to subscribe to pay debts, that this debt of £800 or £900 will hang, I fear, like a millstone over the subscription. But I forget—this debt paid, she may, perhaps, by the labours of her pen, support herself without help. And I do hope the Queen will double her pension.

"In the meanwhile, I am begging for her. I intend to raise £20, and to get more if I can. I shall ask a sovereign from eighteen persons—I have in hand seven already—and then send the £20 up to some one, or pay it into Gurney's bank, to be remitted to her bankers. In such a case, and in many cases, begging is a Christian duty. She has written to me and sent me the papers to distribute.

"I think she would have gained more by an

appeal to the public in the papers, with a list of subscribers; but she and you and her agents know best what to do. I shall be very sorry if I do not raise £20 or more. How I wish it were as easy for me to serve thy nephew!

"Believe me,

"Much thine,

"AMELIA OPIE."

The sum collected was not only sufficient to cover all the outstanding liabilities, but also to add something to the authoress's narrow income.

During the last two years of her life Miss Mitford's health rapidly declined. Mr. Harness frequently visited her at this time; and in a letter to a friend shortly before her death she speaks with her old enthusiasm of her early friend:—

"By the way, this most dear friend of mine has been here for ten days—came for one—found himself a lodging, and has stayed ever since, and will stay ten days longer. Did you ever hear of him? . . . . He has every grace and accomplishment—person (even at sixty odd), voice, manner, talent, literature, and, more than all, the sweetest of natures. His father gave away my mother. We were close friends in childhood, and have re-

mained such ever since. And now he leaves the Deep-dene, with all its beauty of scenery and society, to come to me, a poor sick old woman, just because I am sick, and old, and poor; and because we have loved each other like brother and sister all our lives. How I wish you were here to hear him read Shakespeare, and to listen to conversation that leaves his reading far behind!"

In a note written to himself about this time, and in contemplation of her own approaching dissolution, she observes:—

"You are left, dear friend, to be the one green oak of the forest, after the meaner trees have fallen around you. May God long preserve you to the many still left to grow up under your shade!"

One of the last letters written by Miss Mitford to Mr. Harness, and marked "immediate," contained directions with regard to the publication of her life and correspondence. With characteristic thoughtfulness, she avoids preferring any formal request that might inconvenience her friend or involve him in a laborious and unprofitable undertaking. She does not even express any opinion as to the value of her literary remains, but rather implies a doubt whether any one would think them worth publishing. Finally, however,

she gives a list of persons in possession of her correspondence, and observes that no one knew the course of her life better than himself. From the tenor of this letter it is evident that she wished Mr. Harness to write some biographical notice of her; and some conversations which had passed between them confirmed him in this opinion.

Soon after his friend's death, Mr. Harness commenced the task of looking through her letters, but he found the work much more arduous than he had anticipated. Although her habits were in every respect frugal, her favourite economy seemed to be in paper. Her letters were scribbled on innumerable small scraps — sometimes on printed circulars — sometimes across engravings—and half a dozen of these would form one epistle, and had in course of time become confused and interchanged in their envelopes. When we add to this that towards the end of her life Miss Mitford's handwriting became almost microscopic, it can easily be understood that the arrangement of these Sibylline leaves was no short or easy undertaking. Mr. Harness worked hard at it, out of affection for his lost friend, but at last he felt that, from failing health, he must either abandon his design or call in to his assistance some person who had more time and energy to devote to its

prosecution. Under these circumstances, he applied to Mr. Henry Chorley, a man of well-known literary skill, and one of Miss Mitford's most intimate friends.

In the meanwhile a difficulty arose from a most unexpected quarter. A year before Miss Mitford's death, she made her will, and left her servants K. and Sam her residuary legatees. It is possible that at that time she thought nothing about her letters, or any life which might be written of her, and felt satisfied that at all events she was leaving everything in the safe custody of her executors.

No literary person would ever dream of committing their private correspondence to the hands of half-educated servants, or indeed to those of any one in whose judgment and ability they had not the fullest confidence. Something seems to have occurred to her mind on this subject at the very last, and, being ignorant of law, she thought a letter to Mr. Harness, her executor, would be in every way a sufficient safeguard.* Towards the end of her life, she became very much dependent on her maid, and probably in one of those ebullitions of generosity for which she was remarkable, left her all her little property. On account of the objections raised, Mr. Chorley refused

* The Sweetmans afterwards filed a bill in chancery against Mr. Bentley and myself. It was dismissed without costs.

to proceed with the work, unless an arrangement could be made with the Sweetmans. They, on their part, put in exorbitant claims, and Mr. Chorley withdrew, observing that the work would barely remunerate the Editor. The undertaking was then relinquished, apparently for ever.

Mr. Harness always considered the demands of the Sweetmans to be merely vexatious, as he knew well the wishes of his life-long friend and the entire confidence she placed in him. He was also fully convinced that her servants had no legal claim whatever on any portion of her literary correspondence.

We thus entered upon the work with a flowing sail, and spent two years not unpleasantly in deciphering and arranging the multifarious materials, so as to form an agreeable and continuous narrative of the life of the popular authoress. One great difficulty we encountered spoke favourably for the promise of the book. We had such a redundance of good matter, of clever criticism and graceful description, that we found it very difficult to compress it into anything like readable proportions.

During the following years I was much with Mr. Harness. Our work was principally carried on in his little study—a room well lined with books and adorned with sketches, several of them by Miss

Fanshawe. His residence was in every way a charming *bijou*—a combination of ornament and comfort; and as in his dress he exhibited the most scrupulous neatness and precision, so his household arrangements bespoke taste without extravagance. In his furniture he studied colour and form, and would point out to an intimate friend the little effects which he had produced by certain ingenious dispositions. At the head of the staircase leading to the drawing-room, stood a large mirror reflecting persons entering the room. The apartment itself was in good keeping with the character of its owner. The walls were covered with cases of brightly bound volumes alternating with mirrors draped like the windows. Beside the mantel-piece stood a model of Shakespeare's monument and his bust.

During this period, no one was a more frequent visitor in Mr. Harness's study than the well-known Shakespearian critic, Mr. Dyce. He was a tall thin man, with keen eyes and a strong Scotch accent. They had been literary friends through life; and now, as septuagenarians, they were fond of talking over by-gone days, and sometimes indulging in a little old-fashioned *badinage*. "My rheumatism," Mr. Dyce would observe, "has become more troublesome of late." "Very probably," returned Mr. Harness jocosely; "what is the good of such

an old fellow as you?" (Dyce was eight years the younger.) "Don't insult me," the other replied, with well-affected indignation.

The conversation during these visits frequently turned upon Miss Mitford and her writings, or upon the edition of Shakespeare which Mr. Dyce had then in preparation. With regard to the latter work, Mr. Harness, while fully acknowledging the learning and research of his friend, thought that he had scarcely sufficient enterprise for the task, and was somewhat slow in admitting judicious emendations. He had, for instance, left uncorrected a corrupt and unintelligible passage in the 'Tempest.'*

> "A solemn air, and the best comforter
> To an unsettled fancy, cure thy brains,
> Now useless boiled within thy skull!"

Mr. Harness observed that in Shakespeare's time the *c* and *s* were formed almost alike, and were frequently interchanged; also that the passive "boiled" is inelegant and inapplicable to the brains, whereas the active "boil" would give a good idea of violent mental commotion. In many passages Mr. Dyce did adopt his friend's views. But he mentions the epitaph on Shakespeare's wife without noticing his suggestion that the widow

* Act v., Scene 1.

married again. Mr. Harness, when investigating that point, laid the evidence before an actuary, who replied that "it would be as difficult to disprove the fact of Mrs. Shakespeare having become Mrs. James as that George the Third is now on the throne."

The following extract from a letter received about this time from Mr. Halliwell, bears interesting and valuable testimony to Mr. Harness's critical proficiency:—

"I am constantly reminded of you by your excellent edition of Shakespeare, *your own* explanatory notes to which are, in my opinion (excuse my presumption, but I am always at it, and therefore ought to be able to judge), the best, next to Dr. Johnson's, ever made. I most earnestly wish you would publish another edition with more of them."

On the last occasion on which we walked in the South Kensington Museum, Mr. Harness met his old friend, Mr. Longman. They began to talk of bygone times, and Mr. Longman said he remembered his old enthusiasm for Shakespeare, and asked whether he retained it. "Yes," replied Mr. Harness, "I do. There never was such another man, and there never will be."

The Life of Mary Russell Mitford, commenced in 1866, was three years in progress. In the Autumn of 1868 it appeared to be ready, and we offered it to several leading publishers, who all declined it upon different grounds. Even Mr. Bentley, who at first entertained the proposal, afterwards withdrew on receiving an adverse critique. He at the same time observed that if the work were reduced to half its dimensions he might still entertain it. Mr. Harness undertook the abridgment, and, but for my strenuous opposition, would have curtailed his own introductory notices, and omitted the first letter, which is characteristic and interesting from its date. In a few months he resigned his undertaking; he was feeling the weakness inseparable from advanced age; and the careful reduction of six volumes to three required no slight amount of reading and attention. He accordingly placed the further revision of the work entirely in my hands.

Since Mr. Harness's age had become remarkable, it had been his custom to celebrate his birthday by giving a little party to his immediate friends and relations, and they in turn marked the anniversary by congratulations and other tokens of regard. In this year I was obliged, as it happened, to leave London on the day before this interesting occasion; but in passing I left a bouquet at his house.

Next morning, I received an envelope containing the following lines :—

"Sweet are your flowers; for tho' this sunless Spring
With perfume slight their beauty rare enhances,
A sweeter fragrance to my hearth they bring,
As breathing a kind friend's remembrances.

"Yours ever,
"W. H."

Mr. Harness was always fond of flowers. When the Hon. William Cowper was in office, he suggested to him the establishment of a flower-market in Trafalgar Square. His reply was that he thought it already sufficiently ornamental.

CHAPTER XI.

LETTERS FROM MR. HARNESS, FOR 1866, DURING THE PREPARATION OF "THE LIFE OF MARY RUSSELL MITFORD."

MR. HARNESS'S opinion, that changes are not productive of unmixed good, proved true with regard to the Penny Postage, which effectually destroyed the art of letter-writing. Formerly, people were accustomed to send a letter from one county of England to another, such as they would now despatch to India or the Colonies. It was written upon large square sheets of paper, was carefully and leisurely composed, and filled up to the "way-bits" with a pleasant farrago of solid information and amusing gossip. The whole was finally secured and preserved from prying eyes, by an enormous seal, exhibiting all the weapons and animals that had ever made the family bearings formidable.

Neither in their cost nor in their contents had letters then been reduced to the penny stamp. They had even some little title to epistolary dignity, and letter-writing was regarded as no

unimportant branch of literature. Mr. Harness, among those of his day, was not deficient in this elegant and social accomplishment, and he never altogether condescended to the rapid business style of the present time, but continued to the last to write at some little length, recording the thoughts passing through his mind and the incidents which occurred in his every-day life.

The following letters were written during the preparation of the Life of Miss Mitford, and are interesting from their references to it, and to some events of the time.

"Kensington Gore,
"May 28, 1866.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"Your MS. arrived duly and in safety on Saturday; but I was so occupied all the day that I had not a moment to spare even to write a line to you. I went out early to take a glimpse of the Horticultural Garden Show, and paid half-a-crown to see it in a gradual state of demolition: all that was best already gone, and the rest in a state of removal. The 'pitcher tree' (do you know it?) was the only thing curious that I had not seen a good specimen of before. *That* is eminently curious. But the con-

clusion which I drew from what remained is, that the gardeners are by force of art cultivating away all the beauty of flowers, as the music-masters are practising and straining their pupils out of all the charm of singing. A rose on its natural stem is a beautiful flower; but what can be the beauty of a large red-cabbage sort of thing growing like this (a sketch) at the top of a stiff twig? An azalea is a beautiful thing blooming here and there amid green leaves in its own natural manner; but what is there in a pyramid (another sketch), all flowers and no leaves, superior to the same sort of thing made of pink, yellow, or white silver paper?

"After walking till I was tired, and abusing what remained of the Exhibition, because there was so little left to look at, I went to a shop in the Haymarket, next door to the theatre, to see a very beautiful landscape which had been sent over from America. It is a large view of a scene in the Rocky Mountains, and is well nigh the finest landscape I have ever seen. I wish you had been with me! It is by a man named Reinstadt. He's a German, living and educated in America; and if he can paint more as good pictures as this is, he is the first landscape-painter of our time. My hand is swollen, but free from pain, and I still have no power of voice. So

voice. So altogether, I'm in a bad case, and am going to take advice. Write to me, and remember that I am always,

"Affectionately yours,

"W. H.

"Have you read 'the Spanish Gipsy'—a poem by the author of 'Adam Bede?' If you have not, do! It is really very good; and considering that it is a nineteenth century production, almost intelligible throughout. I have read nothing so like English for many a day."

"Privy Council Office,

"June 5, 1866.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I'm sorry to hear that your friend is so unwell, and more sorry to hear that he has so great a fool for his doctor as to be allowed to keep his bed, or even his room, for influenza. Bed is always the worst place anybody can be in, except for the purposes of bodily rest. My father used to say (and he was the cleverest physician I ever knew), that, 'if it was a good place to cure you of a cold, it was also the place to ensure your catching another.' It weakens a man, body, mind, and nerves; and it's my belief that those are healthiest, wisest, and most energetic, who contrive to keep out of it the most. Nothing but

the necessity of sleep from fatigue, or the incapacity of sitting or standing from sickness, can be an excuse for lying in bed. It is not one person in a thousand who keeps his window open, and fairly ventilates the chamber he sleeps in . . . I forget what the occasion of this tirade on bed-keeping was; but, at all events, those are my opinions, and I could fill half-a-dozen sheets of paper in further explication of them if I had time to write, or you cared to read them.

"I've been very ill. I'm better, and am come down to the office to-day; but I'm as weak as water, and every exertion of mind, even the writing this letter to you ('an office I delight in,'—Shakespeare), seems to puzzle my brain. I was quite well last Friday. I dined at Captain Boyle's, and went afterwards to Miss Coutts' party to meet the Duchess of Cambridge, the Princess Mary and her intended, and to hear Grisi and Mario sing. Enjoyed myself very much, staid till past one, and went home to bed perfectly well. But oh! in the middle of the night I awoke so ill! . . . At present I'm on my way to recovery; but I mayn't go this evening to hear 'David Copperfield,' as I should like to do, and Bence Jones, who never arrived till Sunday, has forbidden my dining out for some days to come.

"Now, this is more than enough about myself—but is the Teck that is to marry the Princess Mary a Prince or a Grand Duke? I forget—however it does not signify which he is for the purpose of this letter: I'll call him Prince. He is really very good-looking, he has—a wonderful thing in a German—good prominent features and white teeth, bright, expressive dark eyes, pleasant smile, graceful bearing, neat, straight, slim figure, and is rather tall; but he looks quite a boy. He may look younger than he is; but, making all due allowance for that (in the present instance) inconvenient advantage, he can't be above two and twenty. She looks charmed with him, and herself, and her situation. But, as she stood near him—or rather he near her—in the ample bloom of her person and her crinoline, she seemed completely to eclipse him. He has a deficiency, a craniological deficiency; his head wants back to it. This, to me, is unpleasant, it argues want of power. A man may be a very good monk without it in a cloister, and become a very bright saint without it in Paradise; but in this world of strife and struggle I should be afraid lest he would succumb before the slightest opposition, and be unable to maintain his own opinion.

"When well, I get on with the MSS. How you love polysyllabic words! For instance, I write

'The Doctor used to *tell* his friends that he should settle the money on his daughter.' You write 'inform.' Why, my dear boy, the old brute never *informed* his friends of anything. To 'inform' implies some kind of seriousness and solemnity in relating a matter—which the Doctor never had. All that his friends ever knew of him or of his affairs—or whatever, false or true, that he intended them to believe about them—came out carelessly from him in his loose, disjointed talk.

"God bless you! Write to me fully about what you are doing.

"Yours ever,

"WILLIAM HARNESS."

"P.S.—I must preach at St. Paul's on Sunday; and soon after that I shall arrange for a few days country by the sea, or on *high* land. Where shall you be?"

"Privy Council Office,

"June 14, 1866.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I was so glad to receive your kind note, and to be assured by your autograph that you had not quite forgotten the exertions I had to undergo last Sunday. Considering that I'm not well, and have not preached these three months, and that the weather was very hot, I got through my work more easily

than I expected. I was called at seven, breakfasted at eight, started for the cathedral at a quarter before nine, and arrived at its door at half-past nine. So that my primary fear of not being in time was happily dissipated. The cathedral felt very cold, which was a good thing for me, as I had not the lassitude of heat, as well as the weakness of indisposition and the infirmities of old age, to fight against. So that, althogether, I did much better than I expected to do. Sultry as the day was, St. Paul's was so much the reverse, that on coming out I was quite glad to find myself in the blaze of the sun again. I was too tired afterwards to go up to Holly Lodge, as Miss Coutts wished me to do; but went quietly home, as soon as I had paid a little visit to the Deanery to look at Milman's picture by Watts. It is very good indeed, like the work of an old master, and bearing a strong resemblance to the Dean, with the exception that the drooping of his left eye is strikingly exaggerated.

"I am not well; I am weak from my illness; and in spite of the iron which Bence Jones is giving me, I don't feel stronger. I mean to see him again to-morrow. But the season is against me. I had a dinner at home last Friday, which I could not put off; and, though I have excused myself from dining out ever since, I have Charles Dickens and some other people to dinner to-day, who have been invited

since the first of the month, and whom I must enjoy —as I shall—the pleasure of receiving; though I fearfully anticipate the fatigue of it. I have a notion of going to Margate on Monday for a day or two. There is a fine jetty to walk on into the midst of the sea. The air is excellent. It is the haunt of cockneys, of whom I don't know one; so that I may fairly hope to enjoy there a very comfortable and salubrious retirement with my Shakespeare as sole companion: unless you would join me there on Monday evening!

"Believe me to be yours,

"Ever affectionately,

"W. HARNESS."

"Kensington Gore,

"June 23, 1866.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"Where did you find the authority for saying that Miss Mitford was bridesmaid at Lady Charles Aynesley's wedding? She certainly never was in the North till the year 1806; and I take it for granted that in the North the marriage of a Northumberland heiress must have taken place.

"London at this present moment is very full, and appears to be very gay; but, except at dinners, I see mightily little of its gaiety. Strange to say, the only extreme bit of dissipation I have been tempted

into, did me considerable good. For several weeks I had been feeling as old as the hills and as weak as water ; but Miss Coutts asked me to dine in Stratton Street on Thursday 'quite quietly, nobody to be there but the party staying in the house'—so I went. After dinner, as the ladies were leaving the room, she said, 'Now you must not be angry; we are going to take you to the Opera. You may sit quite quiet, and go away when you like ; and we don't think it will do you any harm.' So I went. The heat was intense : I was in a vapour bath with all my clothes on, from half-past eight till half-past eleven. It was a sultry thunderstorm outside the walls of the theatre, and a fiery furnace of gas and human beings within. I was all the time in such an overpowering heat that every inch of my coat was as wet as if I had been in a shower-bath.

"Well, I thought it would be the death of a poor wretch in my exhausted condition ! Not a bit of it. I came home—went to bed—slept all night—and woke the next morning, for the first time this month, refreshed and unfatigued, and longing to sing while I was shaving myself. What an odd composition a human being is ! The very thing which has set me to rights and made me feel myself, is the very thing that any doctor would have advised me against, and which

I myself on premeditation should have shrunk from!

"I shall not leave town till after the eighth. I think then of going to the Deepdene to Mrs. Hope for a few days—thence to the sea, and remaining away a fortnight. I never went to Broadstairs! It was so *cold*, I could not make up my mind to leave home. If one was to sit shivering in-doors, I thought I had better execute the performance in my own study than in the coffee-room of a sea-side hotel. Let me hear from you.

"And believe me to be,

"Yours ever,

"W. HARNESS."

"'Rienzi' *did* come out on the 9th of October, 1828. It was my mistake in looking for it in November instead of October, in my old diary; but 'Otto' was *written* in 1827. The first copy of the MS. was in my hands on the 26th of November, 1828, and the arrangement with Forrest in 1837 or 38 was merely for the reviewing of the play to suit him. What day do you dine here? Any day except Monday."

"Holly Lodge, Highgate, London, W.

"Till the 21st of July, 1866.

"16th, to-day.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"Your letter arrived and found me here on Saturday, but I have not had any time to answer it till this morning (half-past six a.m.) in my bedroom. I had thought, from not hearing of you, that you and the vessel must have gone on a voyage of discovery, and that your next letter would be from some island in which you were illuminating the dark minds of the savages. I would not allow myself to imagine for a moment that you had disappeared from the face of the ocean by a catastrophe so sudden as that of the 'Amazon.' But how come you not to have got my letter? I wrote a big packet ever so long ago, of which I forget the details, but the gist of it was that I thought Miss Mitford's letters, in the year 1810, were becoming sufficiently interesting to be published consecutively, with an occasional note here and there, and with certain omissions. I have done up to 1810, and want back the MSS. of 1811, which you have, that, with the help of your papers, I may set them in order in accordance with this plan.

"My disgust of the old father increases with every letter I read. He's a detestable old humbug.

I wish we could get some letters from the relations in Northumberland! There was an old Mary Mitford (the sister, I think, of Lady Charles Aynesley), with whom our Miss Mitford used to correspond; but I believe she died first. It is not at all unlikely but she may have preserved her cousin's letters, and equally likely that her executors have burnt them. Do you happen to know any of those people or their connexions?

"I have not done as much as I ought, because I have not been well; I have been uncommonly relaxed by the heat, and I have been visiting. The doctor said that unless I went to the sea I should not recover my strength; so I went to Battle and staid with Crake, who drove me down to the sea, or up to the heights, where I could either see or smell the sea, every day from five till eight, when we dined; and all the rest of the day I sat in the garden under the shade of the house, and inhaled that mitigated saline air which to me is far more agreeable than the sea itself, for it is health and cheerfulness without any association with the terror of being drowned, or the loathsome feeling of sea-sickness.

"I stay here till Saturday. On Monday, the 23rd, I go to the Milmans; on Thursday, the 26th, I go to Southsea; on Saturday, the 28th, I get

home again. But Brace goes for his holiday in August, and Majendie for his marriage in September; so (as any wise man would) I am catching all the country air I can in the intervals allowed me for mine. Take care of yourself. Don't get drowned.

"And believe me to be
"Yours ever affectionately,
"WILLIAM HARNESS."

"Kensington Gore,
"August 6, 1866.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I have been very idle; for, first, I went to stay a week at Crake's; then I staid the best part of a fortnight at Holly Lodge; then I went to the Dean of St. Paul's for all the working days of the week, from Sunday to Sunday, who has taken up his Summer residence at a very pretty place near Bagshot, a village which now stands in the midst of cultivated land and flowery hedgerows, but which I was wont to pass through, on the top of the Portsmouth coach, as a sort of lodge in the wilderness, surrounded by a desolate extent of heath. What changes we live to see! And to-day I am going for a fortnight to the Osbornes, (Sutgrave House, Cirencester, Gloucestershire), intending, if weather suit, to take a look at

Tintern Abbey and the Wizard Cliff before I return, which must be the 18th, for Brace goes off for his holiday of three weeks on Monday, the 13th; and as soon as he returns Majendie is off for five Sundays on his marriage tour. So a deductive mind like yours will easily discover that I'm tied to town during all the latter part of this month, the whole of September, and the first two weeks of October. In that time I intend to work hard at the letters. I think that they, with a very few notes and a few short passages of explanation, will tell the story of an interesting literary life.

I have done, and had copied, subject to your approval, everything to the end of 1810, and should like to have the letters which are in your hands, to go on with the work after my return from the Osbornes. We must print them, for she evidently took great pains with them; but how much inferior Miss Mitford's letters to Sir William Elford are to those which she dashed off to her father and mother! There is a great deal of life and spirit in her ordinary style, when she lets her words drop from her pen without any premeditation, at the prompting of her emotions; but in the elaborated letters there is hardly any merit but high, cold polish, and all freshness of thought is lost in care about the expression. I think we

shall have to shorten our commencement; so many long letters remain to be read and copied, and the letters improve as she grows older.

"You seem to have had a most delightful voyage. I wish I had been with you, but am very glad that you did not buy the house that you looked at on the banks of the Blackwater! What would you have done there? Besides, if you ever take up your abode in Ireland, it must be on your own property, where there are duties to fulfil which are sufficient to give an interest and business to life the moment a man sets his heart earnestly to the discharge of them. I must now end my letter as it is necessary for me to prepare for leaving home. But let me hear of you, and tell me when you are likely to be in town again. I shall send this to Clifton, as there is no guessing where you and your yacht (I hope the word is spelt right), may be; and with the kindest regards from my sister and cousin,

"Believe me to be,

"Yours ever affectionately,

"WILLIAM HARNESS."

"Privy Council Office,
"Sept. 1, 1866.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I feel quite ashamed of having so long delayed acknowledging the receipt of your parcel with the letters. I have intended to do it every morning since they arrived; but I have had so much to do here, that by post-time I have felt that unpleasant feeling in my old brain which warned me that I had done enough, and that it would be useless, if not wrong, for me to keep my head over paper, with a pen in my hand, any longer.

"This is the sole impediment to my being as good and regular a correspondent as I should wish to be. I'm getting very old, and my pericranium very weak . . . I doubt if I shall be able to do the parish work. My stay in town will be protracted to the middle of October. I'm then invited to Clumber; but I have not answered the Duchess to say whether I will go or not; for—whether it's age or this continued damp, I know not—I really feel too weak and inapt for society to have any inclination for leaving home. Your friend Mrs. D—— has a little girl: she is doing very well, but was rather suffering from the weather when I called to inquire after her yesterday. But I had the good luck to find her

father at home and get some conversation with him, which was very much in the manner of a Greek Tragedy—not those parts in which the dialogue is kept briskly up in alternate lines, but those in which the great gun fires off a volley of several pages, and the attendant chorus exclaims Ὀιμοι, while he recovers his breath for another explosion.

"In London, with nothing to do, I have been reading Baker's 'Journey in Search of the Albert (Nyanza) Lake,' and 'the Source of the Nile.' It has interested me a good deal; not but that I think him a most bumptious and self-laudatory individual, who quite as often disgusts me with his conceit as he excites my wonder by his spirit of enterprise and powers of endurance. As for his wife, who accompanied him in his troubles among savages—dragged through mud and broiling through deserts—she must have been something far stronger in mind and body than the ordinary members of her sex. It is defrauding the curiosity of the public not to lead her about the country as a show.

"On Majendie's return I shall go to the sea, certainly, to get up strength, and be home by the beginning of December to shut myself up comfortably for the Winter. I hear that, when old Mitford was engaged to his wife, she had a

set of shirts made for him, lest it should be said that 'she had married a man without a shirt to his back!' Of course the story is not true; but it expressed what folk thought of his deplorable poverty and the impossibility of his making that settlement on her, for which my father was trustee, out of funds of his own, as Miss Mitford suggests.

"Yours,

"W. HARNESS."

"Kensington Gore,

"Sept. 26, 1866.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I was very glad to see your handwriting this morning. You don't know what it is to be alone in London. Everybody is away; and, strange to say, though at the Athenæum there are several men wandering about, they are all military-looking men, with moustache and martial swagger, who belong to the United Service Club over the way, and are disputing over newspapers and dozing in our arm-chairs while their own house is repairing. All the Athenæum men are either on long vacation, or sketching on the Continent, or doing something sportsmanlike in Scotland. I am really pining to get away; but of course I can't think of moving till Majendie is

fairly returned, which will not be before the 18th. or 20th. of next month! When I do get away I go first to some friends in Hampshire, then to Crake for sea-air and strength, then to the Archdales, then to Clumber, and then home. This round will, I think, occupy me till the first week in December, when I hope to come back to London and to find you here.

"I have got on wonderfully well, I think, with our letters. They seem to make a regular record of Miss Mitford's life and opinions—to me much more interesting than most letters. She often repeats herself, and some of her 'dearest loves' and overflowing affection to that humbug, her father, must be slightly mitigated; its exuberance must be a little repressed.

"My sister is wonderfully well, and desires her kindest regards to you.

"Yours ever,

"W. HARNESS."

"Kensington Gore,

"Oct. 8, 1866.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"If Lady Belcher could procure Miss Mitford's letters to Miss Goldsmid we should be very much obliged to her. Miss Goldsmid is a very clever and *learned* lady, and Miss M.'s letters

to her would be on good topics and in the writer's best style.

"Miss Mitford's connection with the Mitfords of Mitford Castle was (as I always understood) this: Dr. Mitford's father was first cousin to the father of the Bertram Mitford who was head of the family; and when she went to the North she stayed with Lady Charles Aynesley. Lady Charles and her sister stood in the same relation to him as Dr. Mitford, as the children of brothers. Miss Mitford was another generation removed.

"I think we shall have a charming book; but we must go through all the letters and complete it before we talk to any publisher about it; for my views respecting the plan of publication change as I see more and more what it is we have to publish. My present view is that the book should be called 'Life and Opinions of M. R. M., as given in her Letters, with Notes by the Editors.' I like all the letters I have read, except parts of the letters to Sir W. Elford, which (except when she forgets whom she is writing to and is herself again) are in conventional English and almost vulgar in their endeavour to be something particularly good. If I send you off a lot of letters *without date*, should you have time to read them over and exercise your

skill in trying to ascertain when they were written.

"You can have no idea of the utter dreariness and solitude which we have been experiencing since the end of July in this 'Deserted Village.' Till yesterday and to-day we have had nothing but rain and mist, with evenings so cold that one was obliged to have a blazing fire—not, as usual at that season of the year, for cheerfulness-sake, but for actual warmth and comfort. Adieu, with kindest regards from my sister and cousin, and my best compliments to Mr. and Mrs. L'Estrange.

"Believe me to be,

"My dear Guy,

"Your affectionate friend,

"W. HARNESS."

"Of an evening I'm re-reading the first volume of Froude's History, to prepare my memory for the enjoyment of the four last. Adieu!"

"The Deanery, Battle, Sussex.

"Nov. 2, 1866.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"Your letter I found here, after my sojourn with my old friends at my first curacy in Hampshire: and I write, almost at the first pause I have had since my arrival at Crake's, to tell you how

much obliged I am for your thinking of me and sending me the Shakespeare photograph. It is from the Chandos picture, which the late Lord Ellesmere purchased at the sale of the late Duke of Buckingham's effects at Stowe, and of which a print is hanging up opposite my drawing-room door in town. You would not imagine the photo as a copy from the same original, because it is so much darker.

"The letters improve as I get on. Even those to Sir W Elford get easier and better, as she became less upon punctilio and more familiar with him; in fact, as—with all her asserted deference—she felt herself more and more his superior in intellect and information. When we meet in town we will get on swimmingly, as I have no longer any sermons to prepare: I have given up preaching altogether. The first thing to be done is to arrange in chronological order all the letters to Mrs. Browning, that they may come into their fitting places; for I find, to my surprise, that Miss Mitford was acquainted with Miss Barrett as early as 1814.

"I shall stay here, in all probability, till the end of the month, and then go home, light my fire, and pack myself up in my study for the rest of the year, and till the end of Winter.

"I'll tell Dyce to send his Shakespeare to the

Museum at Stratford; but it is not yet finished.* There is one volume (if not a second) yet to come. With best regards,

"Believe me to be,

"Yours ever affectionately,

"W. HARNESS.

"Have you heard that they expect Fenian disturbances in Ireland? I hope it is not true."

* I had mentioned to Mr. Harness that Mr. Dyce's Edition was not in the Shakespearian Museum.

CHAPTER XII.

CONTINUATION OF LETTERS FROM MR. HARNESS FOR 1867-68-69.—OUR LAST INTERVIEW.—HIS SUDDEN AND UNEXPECTED DEATH.

The allusions in the preceding and following letters show that Mr. Harness's health became uncertain during the last few years of his life. Nevertheless, his spirits were so good, and his temperament was so cheerful, that except on some unfavourable days it was difficult to realize that he had reached an advanced age. He no longer occupied his pulpit, as his voice had become weak; but to the last he was never absent from church, and always took some part in the service.

"Kensington Gore,
"May 18, 1867.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I have not been able to write to you, for the letters take up as much work of my hand as I am able to do . . . Longman has all the MS. of our two first volumes. He fears there

is more than the public will care for, but says he will look it over and let me hear. He seemed pleased with the offer of the book. I'm doing now 1831; and am more than half through it. The letters to Miss Jephson are very uninteresting to any but the ladies themselves—particularly as their friend Mr. Cathcart* failed at Covent Garden, and afterwards at the Haymarket. He was not quite so bad as her other *protégé*, Mr. Fitzharris, who failed in 'Othello' at Covent Garden: but he was a miserable actor, who, in spite of a good deal of genius and passion, was perfectly incompetent for any but a very subordinate place at a London theatre—such as London theatres were forty years ago. I shall be very glad to see you again.

"Believe me to be,

"Ever yours,

"WILLIAM HARNESS."

"Kensington Gore,

"June 13, 1867.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"The man alluded to in that note of Miss

* Owing to Miss Mitford's partiality for Cathcart, Charles Kemble gave him a trial at Covent Garden; but after he had been acting for three nights, he refused to continue unless he received an engagement for the whole season. Miss Mitford requested Mr.

Mitford's, as the prototype of a scoundrel in one of Bulwer's novels, was named Wainewright. He wrote charming articles on art under the signature of 'Janus.' He was a friend of Barry Cornwall (Procter) Macready, Talfourd, and all that clique of artists and authors. Charles Lamb was very fond of him, and used to call him the 'light-hearted.' He was born to some inheritance, which he soon spent, and subsequently replenished his finances by murder. The first person he is supposed to have poisoned was his uncle, the proprietor of the *Monthly Review*, whom I knew, but whose name I can't recall, nor shall I—till I don't want it. They say that, first and last, he assisted at least eleven friends and admirers out of their miseries in this world; and, entirely free from any apparent depression of spirits, concluded his eventful and cheerful life as a very successful portrait-painter at Botany Bay. Ask me about him on Monday, and I may be able to tell you more of his story. A real account of the man and his character, such as Charles Lamb, or Procter, or Macready might have written, would present one of the most extraordinary psycho-

Harness to use his influence with Kemble on his behalf. "I cannot give an engagement," was the manager's reply; "Cathcart does well enough as *Jaffier* to my *Pierre;* but how would that little fellow look in a breeches part!"

logical phenomena that ever was witnessed among mankind.

"Yours,

"W. H."

"Privy Council Office,

"July 4, 1867.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I won't tell you how often I complained of your silence! But your letter, when it appeared yesterday at dinner-time, appeased me; and I am at this moment writing, in my usual most complacent state of mind towards that intrepid seaman, the Rev. A. G. L'Estrange. I have done nothing about the book, except read and arrange letters. All my considerations by day, with the MSS. before me, and by night, as I think about them, have led me to this conclusion, that we must finish the book as fast as we can; read the first part over for condensation; and then publish the whole together.

"I am very well at present, and trust that I may remain so; but at seventy-eight (I was going to write eighty-seven) who, without infinite presumption, can depend on life or its faculties for a moment beyond the present? I shall, if Providence permit, leave town as early in the month as I can, after getting in my pew-rents and paying my house-rent and

taxes—the latter movement being contingent on the first.

"I have not done much since you removed from the metropolis, except dining out twice, giving a dinner on the anniversary of my niece's wedding-day,* going twice to garden-parties at Holly Lodge, and seeing 'Dora' at the Olympic. This latter piece of dissipation took place on Monday last. I had heard the play so praised, that I was determined to see it; and so, taking two stall tickets, I asked Mr. Smith to be so good as to go with me and take care of me, which he most kindly did; and, after being bored with a preliminary farce, I poured out my fullest approbation in tears to 'Dora,' from the end of the first act till the green curtain dropped upon the last. I dine out to-day at the Dean of Armagh's.

"When I leave town I shall go to Scottowe, and remain there till I return home. I wish I did not turn sea-sick at the thought of a yacht, or I would follow my letter, and take a sail with you.

"My sister's kind regards.

"Yours affectionately,

"W. HARNESS."

* "And a very pleasant party, though you would not stay for it."

"Privy Council Office,

"July 24, 1867.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I have had a note from Bentley soliciting the publication of our book. I have told him that as soon as it is finished he shall hear of it, and be referred to; but that we can't bind ourselves to publish with anybody till we know what terms may be offered us. I have been very much better these last few days, notwithstanding that I've been working like a horse. The letters of 1836 took me a long time, for several hours a day. Those for 1837 will be in Makeham's* hands by the end of the week.

"So your little friend, Miss Orpen, (is not that the name of Lady Chatterton's niece?) is married at last. She seems to be charmed with her condition, and I had a note from her, signed 'R. D. Ferrers,' which reached me the day after the announcement of the marriage appeared in the newspapers. She is living at Finchden, which is Lady Chatterton's place, and which as she describes it (an old house of black and white timber, with seven antique and carved gables to it) must be in excellent keeping with its inhabitants. It seems that they are

* Mr. Harness's amanuensis for five-and-twenty years.

all going to live together, aunt and niece with their respective husbands, at the black and white house with its seven gables.

"Lady Chatterton has written a play—a tragedy—called 'Oswald of Deria,' which is to be bound in white in honour of Mrs. Ferrers' marriage, and it is hoped that it will eventually be acted in the large drawing-room of Finchden, which has been re-constructed and enlarged by Lady Chatterton 'expressly for private theatricals. I am to have a copy of the play.

"We have had marvellous doings here with foreign visitors! Miss Coutts's luncheon to the Belgians was magnificent! A beautiful thing to see the troops defiling before her and marching through the grounds to the banqueting tents—2,400 of them (men, not tents), and all finding their places and eating their dinners with the greatest *goût*, appetite, and decorum. They had a splendid repast, with grapes, pines, peaches, &c.; and one hundred and fifty-four *dozens* of champagne were dismissed before the dinner was over. The day—at least so much of it as was wanted for Holly Lodge—was just what one would wish. It was fair, with occasional gleams of bright sunshine, but never too hot. Archdale talked a good deal to the Belgians, and they all ex-

pressed themselves in terms of wondering delight at the entertainment they had received. The Sultan says that 'in Paris he saw what civilization was—in England he saw what it was that produced it.'

"Good-bye! God bless you! I can't write long together. It fatigues my eyes; and so, with Mary's love, believe me to be, my dear L'Estrange,

"Yours ever,

"W. HARNESS."

"Scottowe, Norwich,

"August 11, 1867.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I don't believe you ever received a long letter which I wrote to you from London and directed to Finisterre, for you ought to have had it some days before the date of your last, which is written from some place that I never heard of before, and am not quite sure that I read correctly.

"We have moved from London at last to Scottowe with the Archdales, arriving all together last Wednesday. We left rain behind us and arrived in rain; but the fine weather set in on our arrival, and the glass is now at 'fair,' the sky clear,

the wind in the east (which in Norfolk is an especial favourite), and the sun as hot and scorching as any human being could possibly desire.

"I had rather a dread of taking so long a journey at one heat; so I started on the Tuesday, slept at Ely, and proceeded to Norwich by a mid-day train the next day, in time to meet and accompany my sister and the Archdales to this place. I was perfectly delighted with Ely. I did not go to the Cathedral on the Tuesday evening, for I only arrived at my hotel (the 'Lamb,' a most comfortable house), in time for a late dinner; but I was up early the next morning, and spent several hours in the magnificent building. The restorations are not quite finished, but all that has been done is wonderfully well done, and though the funds do not come in so rapidly and liberally as at first they did, they are still progressing with the work. Nothing can be better than the taste and skill with which Styleman L'Estrange painted the ceiling, and the piece which he died before completing, and left Gambier Parry to do, is so well done that no eye could distinguish where the one left off and the other began. The duty was very well performed; but I hated the intoning till the Dean took it up at the Lord's Prayer in the

Litany, and finished the service. I then saw, or rather heard, that intoning might be made very agreeable, and that there is as much difference between the intoning of one man and another as between one man's reading and another's. I intend, if well enough, to go to Ely in late Autumn for a couple of nights—Saturday and Sunday nights — and have a full treat of the service. If you are good, I'll ask you to go with me.

"I have just been reading a novel called 'Sprung up like a Flower.' It's all about a decayed family of L'Estranges, very clever and very heart-breaking.

"It is my intention to stay here till September 30, making, if well enough, a short episodical visit to Clumber; and after my return we must work. I have almost finished the letters of 1838. I shan't write any more, for I know you'll never get the letter. But whether you do or not,

"Believe me to be,

"Yours affectionately,

"W. HARNESS."

"The New Inn, Maudesley, Norwich,

"Oct. 9, 1867.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"Your letter reached me, *viâ* London, yesterday morning; and I'm very sorry to hear so sad an account of your mother's health. Nobody ought to be ill at Malvern, where everybody goes to be made well; and where, if report be true, everybody feels himself better. I'm glad to find that your account of Mrs. Simmonds (*i.e.* Harris), is not so bad as I had fancied. She is a good old soul, but I have always had a terror of the husband as a religious humbug.

"The story of the dog is not *quite* exactly the fact. The dog was mine—given me as a puppy by Henry Hope. It was a clever, cunning, fawning, unamiable dog; and, as Mrs. Harris liked it, when she married I let her have it. Its beauty, in its youth, was so great that Prince Albert wanted to purchase it, and the man who rode up to my servant to negotiate the transaction offered £50 for her. But the last glimpse I had at 'Fairy' was through a photographic representation of her from Guernsey, in which all the beauty and grace seemed gone, and she looked like a drowned dog that had swollen a week in the water.

"I am come to a dead stop with the letters;

there are only two or three dreadfully dull ones, for 1846 and '47. Some of the best, to Miss Barrett, are not there—particularly one on the *ill* effects of scenery in dramatic representations, which is excellent, and almost original in its notions.

"Memo: I have not the originals of the letters which are copied; and (as I never look at the copies, from having been so worried by the mistakes in writing the names of people) those letters are virtually absent. So that I have really nothing to go on upon but Mrs. Jenning's MS. We must have *all* the letters to Miss Barrett which we can fairly print, and make our abridgments in the beginning of the book: we can cut out plenty there.

"I'm better, but I feel that my principal ailment is old age. My sister desires her kindest regards and best thanks to Mrs. L'Estrange.

"Yours ever,

"W. HARNESS."

"The New Inn, Mundesley, Norwich,

"Oct. 21, 1867.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I can't write more than a few lines, to tell you of my whereabouts, for my eyes are dim with working ever since breakfast at Miss Gold-

smid's letters. I have begun at the *end*, at poor Miss Mitford's death, and am working back. I have done all the long MS. of Mrs. Jennings.

"There was a great deal to be cut out—things told in other letters, and some things actionable as calumny—viz.: 'the account of the raffle for Southey's copyrights.' The dissensions of that family were very painful and very incomprehensible. In London, everybody was of Mrs. S.'s faction: at Keswick, everybody was of the children's faction. I suppose, as in all family quarrels, everybody was a little right, and as much wrong as they could be.

"We hope to leave this and begin our return home on Monday. On getting home, I shall write to my acquaintance Appleton, the New York publisher, and negotiate with him for the publication of the book in America, as well as in England. It seems to me that Miss Mitford's reputation there was greater than with us. There is a means of securing copyright in both quarters of the globe, but we must inquire what those means are.

"Believe me to be,

"Yours ever,

"W. HARNESS."

"Privy Council Office,

"March 18, 1868.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I am sorry to hear that the tranquillity of your mind has been discomposed by a landstorm about your yacht; as, from your father and mother having recovered themselves a little, there was a brighter promise of enjoying your visit to Clifton than your friends had anticipated for you. But what has happened? What is the delinquency of the captain? I'm quite nervous to hear.

"Last Saturday was my birthday: I entered my 79th year amid the congratulations and cheers of my friends, who seemed to eat a very merry dinner on the occasion, at which I was too deaf to hear a word that was spoken. Indeed, I have caught a cold, and have a wheezing on my chest, which, with my deafness, renders me a most useless and extremely stupid individual.

"I have just been calling on Milman. He has been most seriously ill, but is a good deal better. He saw me, and told me rather an amusing anecdote. An Irish farmer, who had been corrupted by reading some liberal books, refused to pay his priest's dues. 'No, he wouldn't; the Priest might turn him into mice, if he could, and said he would do; but he denied his power, and would not give him a six-

pence.' The farmer remained contumacious and victorious. But still, triumphant infidel as he was, when night drew on, and they were preparing for bed, he said to his wife, 'Biddy, don't you think we had better lock up the cats?'

"Good-bye! I can't write long.

"Believe me to be,

"Yours ever affectionately,

"W. HARNESS."

"Privy Council Office,

"March 23, 1868.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I am a good deal better, but feel oppressed in my chest, and don't expect to be altogether right and sprightly, as a youth in his seventy-ninth year ought to be, till the sun has had time enough to air the wind, and these occasional sharp fits of Winter have finally disappeared. However, I have been doing some work here (*i. e.* Council Office,) to-day; and I did some Miss Mitford before I left home this morning.

"In one of Mrs. Hoare's letters there is, in very fair writing, the word 'fritillaries,'—a plant, a wild plant; do you know anything about such a creature?

"The far-seeing world, who know what the Devil intends to do next, are all prophesying a 'No-

Popery' cry. If it arise, the effects in Ireland and England will be terrible. In England, the sufferers will be the Ritualists; in Ireland, it will in all probability provoke a civil war.

"A story: 'Oh! Pat; and what do ye think will be your feelings at the Day of Judgment, when you meet Mrs. Mahoney, and the pig you stole from her, face to face?' 'Does your Reverence think the pig will be there?' 'Ay, indeed will he; and what will ye say then?' 'I shall say, your Reverence, "Mrs. Mahoney, dear, here's the pig that I borrowed of ye, and I'm mighty glad to have this opportunity of restoring him!'"

"We must shorten the early part of Miss Mitford's life to bring it into proportion with the latter part. This can easily be done by leaving out some of the poetry, and cutting shorter her letters to Sir W. Elford; or rather abridging those epistles into letters.

"I have nothing more to say.

"Believe me to be,

"My dear Guy,

"Yours ever,

"W. HARNESS."

"Riddle:—I give you £100, and you are to give me one hundred animals. The cows cost £5, the pigs £1, and the hens one shilling each. How

many of each kind will you send me in return for my cheque? I must have one hundred animals for my money."

"Privy Council Office

"June 22, 1868.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I have been all last week at Holly Lodge, doing the only thing that I was capable of, in such intense and continuous heat—sitting out of doors in the shade, with my mouth a-jar to catch the little air that was moving, and ready for talk with anybody that happened to pass by. I did not return till Saturday morning; and, I suppose, I shall soon go back again. I certainly shall, if the weather be as it has been. Yesterday (a sad breach of the Sabbath, but really the day excused it) I gave way to a kind solicitation of Mrs. Disney, and drove out with her from four to six to see if any air could be found on Barnes Common and Putney Heath; for there was none to speak of—a mere sufficiency for the sustenance of a gasping existence—to be had in London. We succeeded in our exertions, and finding a breeze under the shade of a tree on the Barnes road, we stopped the carriage, and sat nearly an hour in the placid enjoyment of it.

"I have done nothing with Miss Mitford, nor

till the weather is cooler shall I attempt it. I have not strength to untie the parcel. To reduce the Life to one volume, is re-writing the book and making a Biography of my friend—which I never intended, and now have not the strength to undertake. It would have been, at first, less trouble than the assorting her letters and making them tell her story. I am glad to hear your mother is so much better; keep her out of doors and amused.

"Believe me to be,

"Yours ever,

"WILLIAM HARNESS.

"I went to hear the 'Messiah' the other night. The music, of course, charmed me; but I had heard it all better sung, with more heart and feeling, in the olden times, in the Hanover Square Rooms. At Exeter Hall the voices are strained, and with all their straining are lost in space."

"Privy Council Office,

"Oct. 2, 1868.

"Thank you, my dear L'Estrange, for your kind note of this morning. I was, and am, a good deal affected by poor Milman's death. We had been friends ever since 1802; and the death of one whom I have known so long, and who was so near my own age, seems like the pulling

up the young roots of one's life from the ground. I was at his funeral, which was very solemn and very affecting to those who were as much attached to him as myself.

"I should be off a-tree-planting, were I in your place, at once, that the job may be finished and yourself in England before the election rows begin in Ireland.

"Yours,

"W. HARNESS."

"Privy Council Office,

"Feb. 18, 1869.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I was very glad to get your letter, for I began to wonder what could have become of you. I was not quite sure but you might have been blown off the cliff.

"Ever since you left town, as the weather has been growing damper and damper, I have been growing deafer and deafer! Now, it is really very painful, this absence of the sense of hearing when I'm in company. It renders me a bore to my companions, and a burden to myself. I trust, however, that, as the days clear, and the ground dries, and the sun brightens, it may partly disappear.

"Yesterday, and I believe to-day, there is a pair

of artificial *second-hand* legs on exhibition at an auction-room in Bond Street. It is not said whether they are on sale or not. But the exhibition of them is very disgusting to my mind. They were the legs worn by Sir Thomas Trowbridge, and more respect was due to them as having been worn by that excellent man and distinguished soldier.

"I'm reading a novel written by Mrs. Coventry's grandmother, which I read (almost the first *full-grown* book I ever did read) in the year my sister was born, 1811. I have never seen it since. 'The Beggar Girl;' there are eight volumes of it. I have almost read the first volume, and seem to have a dream-like remembrance of what is to come. It's different from novels of the present day, and contains some occasional bad English; but it's very clever. She was a great beauty, as well as an authoress—a Mrs. Bennett—and also the mother of old Mrs. Scott Waring, who died last year at the age of 102, and whom, I dare say, you may remember to have seen at church.

"Believe me to be,

"Yours ever,

"WILLIAM HARNESS."

"Kensington Gore,

"Feb. 27, 1869.

"Many thanks, my dear L'Estrange, for your present, with which my brother and I opened our dinner yesterday. They are excellent and most acceptable.

"I enter my eightieth year to-morrow fortnight! All my romance about convent life is put to flight for ever; and I am told, by those who have seen the nuns, that their ugliness is past belief. I think it would be an excellent thing—as very many Roman Catholics do—that it would be a great reform of their ecclesiastical system, if the clergy were allowed to marry, *i.e*, if no vow of celibacy were enforced on ordination; but I must condemn the man who first voluntarily takes the vow, and then considers himself justified in breaking it.

"I don't understand about zoophytes; you must teach me. I was very much shocked to hear of poor Delawarr's death. He was an excellent and charming person. Considering that he always looked delicate and consumptive in early life, it was a marvel that he lived to be so old. He and I were great friends once; but I never could be at the trouble of keeping up noble friendships, unless the coronet did two-thirds of the business.

"I believe there was no actual quarrel with

Byron. It was simply a case of incompatibility. The ardour of B. was more than D. could adequately meet. But I must be off to read the Chief Justice's charge anent the nuns; and I have very little time to do it in, as I must go and see poor Dyce, who is very ill indeed. Mrs. Disney is dead. The Dean is in deep grief.

"My sister's kind remembrances.

"Yours ever affectionately,

"WILLIAM HARNESS."

"Worting, Basingstoke, Hants,

"July 31, [1869.]

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I came here to my brother's last Thursday, directly after marrying two young people who had asked me to perform the service, and for whose sake I remained the beginning of the week in town. They seemed very happy on the occasion; and I felt myself supremely happy in getting the ceremony over, and being able to escape into the country.

"I am already better—more *alive*—for the change of air. It really is a delightful thing, *having nothing to do.* The cottage is so small that my servant is always hitting his head against the doors, and says the rooms were only made for little people; but it is a great pleasure to

move about from one room to the other, and then to sit awhile in the little hall with the door between the two, and enjoy the fresh air of the Hampshire hills, brisk from the sea, and unadulterated by any metropolitan mixtures.

"I shall be away from town, and in all probability *here*, till the 18th of September, when the church will again be opened. It closes on Monday for painting and repairing, and the congregation assembles in the large room at Kent House, which Mr. Henry has been so good as to lend me for the occasion.

"Believe me,

"Yours affectionately,

"WILLIAM HARNESS."

"Worting, Basingstoke,

"Aug. 18, 1869.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I have had nothing to tell, and therefore have not written. Day follows day, each like the other in every thing, I am happy to say; as I certainly am a great deal better and less deaf every day that I am content to remain in this quiet home. I have not for these five years felt so free from all uneasiness or agedness as I am feeling at present. Thank God!

"This is our life: breakfast at nine, luncheon

at one, tea at five, dinner at seven, coffee at nine, bed at half-past ten. Every meal exact to time, except tea at five; that varies, as Arthur drives Coe and me out in a basket-carriage after luncheon, and we very often don't get back from our excursion so soon; indeed sometimes we are so late as not to have any tea at all.

"You now know the whole course of my life; and when you have heard that between whiles I play with the dog, or doze over Crabb Robinson's "Journal," I don't think you have any more to hear of the present doings of W. H.

"I have just had a letter from Miss Skerrett; it is, strange to say, *legible*. She claims the fulfilment of a promise that, should any of Miss Mitford's letters to her be printed, proofs of the MS. should be shown to her, and not published without her consent. I have written to assure her that her wish shall be complied with; but, as far as I recollect, no letters to her are given.

"I don't know whither to send this. I must try Dover. My sister is gone to Norfolk, on her way to Lincolnshire, and I think of following her in about a fortnight. How the time does fly when one is happy and in good air!

"God bless you!

"William Harness."

"Worting, Basingstoke,

"Aug. 31, 1869.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"I hasten to answer your question as well as I can. 'The Revenge' is a very popular tragedy, by Young (Edward, I think), and the principal character is Zanga. The 'Bellario' you want I can't tell. There are at least fifty Bellarios in the old English Drama; but I can't guess, from the slight hint you give me, which this alluded to by Miss Mitford may be, unless it be the young lady in disguise who is the heroine in 'Philaster,' a celebrated play of Beaumont and Fletcher's. George Darnley wrote two plays, very good, on English history, about thirty years ago. I have them both, but can't remember the names of them. He was a very studious literary person, and well nigh stone-deaf. I could help you, if I could see the text in full and had my books at hand; but here, except scientific books, we have nothing but 'Crabb Robinson's Life' and a few novels.

"About 'Clarissa's' work I can't make a guess. I suppose it has some reference to Mademoiselle D'Arblay's novel. You must not forget to put a note on Hugh Pearson when you insert his letters from Miss Mitford. He is a very able and accomplished man, and from the time of

being appointed Rector of Sonning, which happened when he was quite young in orders, a kindred taste for literature attracted him to the companionship of Miss Mitford, to whom he eventually became a most invaluable friend. If you look his name out in 'Crockford's Clerical Guide, you will find the dates of his preferment.

"If you go to Sandwich again, do try to get me some seeds or cuttings of the Trumpet tree. I shall be here till the 28th, if I don't leave on Friday. Adieu! I'm going to Basingstoke for letters.

"Yours ever affectionately,
"W. H."

The last time I saw Mr. Harness was about a fortnight before his death. I was passing through London, and, hearing that he was at home, determined to call upon him on my way. He was in his little study, looking as happy and genial as ever, and our conversation turned on the passing events of the day, and especially on the scandalous imputations which Mrs. Stowe had recently brought against Lord Byron. He said that he had heard the charge long before—that it arose out of the publication of Manfred; but was as untrue as it was revolting. He reiterated what he had before said of Byron's love of romancing and of exaggerat-

ing his dissipations, and that he was encouraged in such rhapsodies by the serious interpretation his wife put upon them. His wilful conduct in this respect had greatly tarnished his memory.

As I was taking my leave, I referred to the forthcoming Life of Mary Russell Mitford, and speaking about the payment to be made by Bentley, inquired whether he would not receive a portion of it. In reply, he generously said that he would not; that I had been much occupied in the preparation of the work, and all he wished to be taken out of the money was £20 to be given to the Sweetmans. I was much surprised at the nature of this request; but I knew that he had a great affection for old servants—he had (as already mentioned) put up a stained window in All Saints' Church in memory of his nurse—and I merely inquired whether I should give them more, as I was ready to comply in every way with his wishes. To this he replied 'No; twenty pounds;' and as he offered no explanation I remained for a long time in ignorance of his motive.*

When our conversation was ended, I wished Mr. Harness farewell, little thinking our parting

* In Miss Mitford's last letter to Mr. Harness, she requested him to give them a part of the profits.

was to be for ever! We were in fact looking forward to the pleasure of an early meeting, and to the arrival of an especially interesting anniversary, when he should accomplish his 80th year.

The last letter I received from him was the following:—

"London,
"Nov. 6, 1869.

"My dear L'Estrange,

"Nothing has happened since I came back, except the arrival of Mr. Archdale in town, who has been driven from Norfolk by the bitterness of the cold. I was very happy at Sherborne. I like living in a school; it is so regular in the hours, and the meals are so ample and plain and good. To be sure I felt very much as if I was a pupil, and subject to the laws of the school, from which, when I transgressed them by appearing too late at breakfast or dinner, I was only absolved from the punishment by some illogical and partial exception.

"My pen won't write, and when that is the case, my mind is always suggesting false words to my ink.

"When shall you be back? I am told to go to the sea for a few days, and intend being with

Crake at Battle from Monday till Saturday. I hope the sea-air will carry away my cough before it gets fixed for the Winter. I'm very old; and at that age in which keeping alive seems to be the sole object of living.

"I have heard nothing of Miss Mitford nor of Miss Austen; the life of the latter I'm looking for with great anxiety. In the meantime, I've been spending my evenings on the dullest of books, with clever things in it — *Noblesse oblige.*

"When do you come back. I'm off to dine with my niece.

"Yours ever affectionately,

"W. HARNESS."

Among those to whom Mr. Harness was most warmly attached was Mr. Crake, who had been for twelve years his curate at Knightsbridge. Their intimacy continued after the latter had become Dean of Battle; and Mr. Harness knew that he was always welcome at the Deanery, and frequently accepted his friend's hospitality. It was a pleasant and easy change for him from the cares and toils of London; and the freedom from conventionality which he there enjoyed was as grateful to him as the fresh sea-breezes were invigorating. Even the old Deanery itself possessed

an attraction for him, with its battlements, its wide hearths and panelled walls.

On the occasion of which we are about to speak, there would seem to have been almost a fatality in his visit. The day before his departure, a note arrived from Mr. Tysley, in Prince's Gardens, inviting him to dine on the following Thursday. Mr. Harness, however, was a man who seldom altered his plans; he felt a longing for country air, and wrote to the Dean that he could always make himself happy with his books, in however lonely a position.

He therefore started to pay the fatal visit on the day he originally named; he seemed remarkably well when he arrived, and spent the greater part of Tuesday and Wednesday sitting in his arm-chair, with his favourite Shakespeare in his hand—the changing play of his countenance, as he read, showing he was still alive to his old enthusiasm. On Thursday, he walked for a considerable time up and down the garden, and returning to the house by some new stairs, remarked to the Dean, "When you are an old man, you'll repent having placed those stairs there!"

Later in the day some friends called, and a lady observed that he seemed in unusually good spirits, and that, but for his slight deafness, no one would have thought him an old man. He talked with ani-

mation; and seemed to take as much interest as ever in the affairs of life, although he observed, somewhat sadly, that he had survived all his contemporary friends. They left at six o'clock, and, the Dean having by this time started to keep an engagement in St. Leonards, Mr. Harness was left quite alone. At half-past six his servant came to the study to inform him that it was time to prepare for dinner, when, to his consternation, he found the room vacant; and almost at the same time the butler, who was going across the hall, was horrified at finding Mr. Harness's body lying head-foremost at the bottom of the stone stairs. He saw at once that he was dead; his head was lying in a pool of blood; but his expression was so peaceful and benign, the man said, that, although he knew he was dead, he could almost have imagined he was asleep.

It seems probable that Mr. Harness left the study when the light was uncertain, just before the lamps were lit, and in the dusk did not observe the staircase. On examination, it was found that the skull was severely fractured.

A fortnight after our separation in London, one calm autumnal day at the end of the long summer, when the yellow leaves were dropping silently from the trees—I was sitting at the window of my study at Clifton, reading the first copy of Miss Mitford's

Life, which had just been forwarded by the publisher. I was musing over and reviewing the results of our three years' labour, with those mingled feelings which seem to attend the completion of all literary enterprises. Suddenly, I heard the sharp knock of the postman at the door, and in a few minutes the servant entered the room with a letter. I broke the seal. I had observed the deep black border, but never could have conceived the crushing intelligence it conveyed. The words were as follows:—

"The Deanery, Battle,

"Nov. 12, [1869.]

"My dear L'Estrange,

"Our poor dear old friend Harness is no more. He fell down a flight of stone steps at the Deanery last night, and was instantly killed.

"Poor Miss Harness and Miss Archdale have been here, but have returned home. The funeral takes place here on Monday afternoon.

"I will not attempt to tell my sorrow.

"Yours ever,

"E. N. Crake."

The blow was so sudden and severe that for some moments I could not comprehend the intelligence. Dead! One whom I had so intimately

known, and had seen a few days before in the enjoyment of the fullest health and vigour! I could not realize the fact; it seemed overwhelming.

Mr. Harness was never married; but I have heard that there was some romance and disappointment in his early life. In speaking of celibacy, he was wont to say, "There is always some story connected with it." He felt less than others his isolated position, inasmuch as he had a sister to whom he was devotedly attached, and who superintended his household. I never saw his usual buoyancy of spirits desert him but when she was unwell; then, he was an altered man, and seemed equally unable to attend either to business or pleasure. They had a rule, which to some may appear strange—Neither of them was, on ordinary occasions, to make inquiries after the other's health. Mr. Harness thought the expression of such solicitude had an injurious effect, and led people to imagine themselves suffering from ailments.

His health, even in old age, was remarkably good, and his faculties were to the last in a wonderful state of preservation. His hair, though changed in colour, was as thick as ever, and clustered in curls as in his early youth; his complexion was clear and fresh; his teeth beautifully

white and perfect; and he could see so well as to be able to read the newspaper without glasses. He still, to the last, retained remnants of that beauty which Sir Thomas Lawrence had admired in his childhood. Old age had no Winter for his genial nature. Indeed, he used to say that the older we grow the happier we become. In one of his sermons, written after he had passed his seventh decade, he observes, "There is one time when the age of even threescore years and ten seems by no means great; and that is, when you have reached it yourself."

It was remarkable, in connection with his fate, that he never dreaded an unexpected death, but always said he should prefer it to a lingering illness. He objected to the prayer in the Litany on this subject, and said he wished the proposed word "unprepared" had been substituted for "sudden." In this desire, therefore, as in his life, he seems to have been blessed; for he died without a struggle, and, as far as could be ascertained, without any suffering.

It is almost surprising, when we consider the infirmity (lameness) with which he was afflicted through life, and his constant danger of falling, that he ever reached the span of an octogenarian. On several occasions he met with severe falls; on one especially, when, in company with the Dean

of Battle, they had been attending a visitation charge at St. Paul's. They had stood for five hours, and on leaving the Cathedral by the south entrance, Mr. Harness's knee gave way at the top of the flight of steps, and he fell head-foremost to the bottom. The Dean thought he must have been killed on the spot; but, as he said, he seemed to have fallen "like a child;" and such was Mr. Harness's spirit and unwillingness to disappoint his friends, that he would not put off a dinner engagement which he had made for that evening.

Mr. Harness was buried at Battle, where he died. His simple funeral was attended by his brother and nephew and by two or three attached friends. Shortly afterwards, a committee was formed with the view of raising a subscription to commemorate his labours and his virtues; and it is worthy of record, as marking the respect in which he was held by those who differed from his views, that although he consistently opposed the claims of Rome, one of the earliest contributors to the fund was a Roman Catholic.

After much consideration as to what would be the most suitable kind of memorial, it was determined that a prize bearing his name should be founded at Cambridge for the study

of Shakespearian Literature, and that a brass tablet should be placed in the centre aisle of All Saints' Church, Knightsbridge, "As a record of his generous actions and faithful ministry, by his friends and grateful parishioners."

THE END.

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